THE FAVORITE VILLAGE

A POEM.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

WEDN.Y MAY XXXI, MDCCCXV.

TO THE REV. JOHN COURTAIL, A. M.

ARCHDEACON OF LEWES,

THE FOLLOWING POEM

(DESCRIPTIVE OF THOSE RURAL SATISFACTIONS

AND AMUSEMENTS, TO WHICH,

IN THE SPIRIT OF TRUE TASTE,

HE HAS, FOR MANY YEARS, GIVEN

THEIR DUE PREFERENCE)

IS, WITH RESPECT AND VENERATION,

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

THE FAVORITE VILLAGE.

BOOK I.

ARGUMENT of the First Book.

The ſubject propoſed, viz, the pleaſures of the Village— The Village itſelf deſcribed— The pleaſure of rural ſpectacles— The peaſant's funeral— Deſcription of the Author's houſe— of the hills near it— and of one lofty eminence in particular— the proſpect from it— The pleaſures of early Summer firſt deſcribed— the ſight of haymaking— of the bull— of the cloſe of evening— of the whirlwind— of the thunderſtorm— of the country after it— The pleaſure of looking over cornfields in July— of bathing in the ſea— of beholding the ſea in a ſtorm— during a calm &c.

THE
FAVORITE VILLAGE.

BOOK I.

PLACE of my birth, O fondly let me ſing
Thy *pleaſures* multifarious, paſs the ſun
Through what fair ſign it will. Around a pool
In a deep vale aſſemble thy warm huts,
All overhung by intermingling elms,
Save where the ſteep-aſcending ſtreet (if ſtreet
May yon looſe chain of tenements be deemed)
Girds the contiguous hill, roof above roof,
And terminates above in farmer's cloſe,
Or ſawyer's pit with frequent boards beſet.
Hard by, o'ertopping fair the nether elms,
But little ſhewing of the verdant hill

That underprops his columns, ſtands the Church.
A cheerful look athwart the vale he caſts,
Smiles at the diſtant ocean half-eclipſed
Behind yon ſudden intervening down,
And bleſſes the proud eminence, whoſe ſteep,
For ever flock-fed, ſhelters his loved elms
Scatter'd wherever in the vale below.
Faſt by him ſtands, and not, like modern dome,
To the poor manſion of the LORD OF HOSTS
Abhors propinquity, the rural ſeat
Of one whom Britain hailed erewhile her chief
Of princely miniſters, Newcaſtle's Duke.
Pertains to Pelham ſtill the rural ſpot,
Its pious ſite to his religious mind
Convenient, proper. Muſing let me paſs

Thy ſilent door and unfrequented walks,
Manſion deſerted, and with pond'ring heart
Think, what is greatneſs in this world below!
Where is thy rich poſſeſſor, whoſe warm heart
Peopled the vale with his unnumber'd gueſt:
Who ſpread profuſion round the hall within,
And to the border of the lawn without?
All, all is huſhed. The airy viſion's fled.
The mighty maſter and his hoſt of friends
Are wellnigh melted all into the grave.
A ſhadow are they, an expiring ſound
Reverberated oft from hill to hill
Till now but ſeldom and but faintly heard.
Soon muſt the whole depart, and other names
Poſſeſs the echo, till their hour is ſpent,

And future tongues 'gin prate of future days.
So preſs we all into the yawning gulf
Of vaſt Eternity. Theſe leaning ſtones,
Which gird with cincture ruinous the church,
What preach they but of youth and age deceaſed,
And ſexes mingled in the populous ſoil,
Till it o'erlooks with ſwoln and ridgy brow
The ſmoother croft below? A little hour,
A moment, and the fretful miner Death
Shall delve again with implement ſevere
Into the bowels of this reſtleſs plot,
And bid a generation couch beneath.

Say, ancient edifice, thyſelf with years
Grown grey, how long upon the hill has ſtood
Thy weather-braving tower, and ſilent mark'd

The human leaf inconſtant bud and fall?

The generations of deciduous man——

How often haſt thou ſeen them paſs away?

How often has thy ſtill ſurrounding ſward

Yawn'd for the fathers of the peopled vale

And cloſed upon them all? Thy during fane,

How often has it ſhed the dew of grace

On the mute infant, and received him ſoon

A coffin'd elder ſilver-lock'd with age?

O tell me, rev'rend ſtructure, what events

Of awful import on the tide of time

Have floated by thee, as the bubble vain?

What armies on that diſtant hill engaged

To leave thoſe ſcars of war upon its brow?

What blood was ſhed, and why? and where ſleep now

The wrathful combatants of either hoſt?

Saw'ſt thou the hill its hungry entrails ope

To ſwallow the pale dead, which reaſon deems

Beneath the ſtill ſward ſlumber of yon mounts?

Princes and peoples (would'ſt thou make report)

Armies and fleets haſt thou ſeen paſs away,

Tranſient as vapour; and in thy eſteem

All things are yeſterday and recent change.

Speak, thou ſage preacher, and, to make me wiſe,

Tell but that ancient ſecret, where ſleeps now

He who thy aiſles deſigned, or they who built?

'Deep, deep in earth, nor ſhall thy life ſuffice

'The mingled generations to remove,

'Whoſe bones and aſhes have enveloped their's.

'Theſe my profound and monitory bell

'All to their ſtill graves ſummon'd, as it calls
'Now to his narrow everlaſting couch
'Yon villager departed. Aſk no more.
'Erelong I toll for thee. Away, prepare.'
Lo the proceſſion! Let me pauſe intent
And firſt drink *pleaſure* at the peaſant's grave.
Humane and Chriſtian is the muſe, and fond
Of ev'ry object, cheerful or ſedate,
Which rural ſcenes afford. She nor contemns
The nuptial holiday, nor views untouched
The ſad ſolemnity of ruſtic woe,
What time the white-frock'd mourner ſlowly moves,
And brings with mute reluctance to the grave
The dear remains of ſome departed friend.
The decent ſheet that overſpreads the bier!

How well becomes it ſorrow neat as their's,
Pure, and unſullied by the ſhameleſs tear
Of wrung hypocriſy! Steel were the heart
That could this paſſing ſpectacle ſurvey,
Nor feel the touch of ſympathy within.
Me it well pleaſes to the holy ſward
To follow pitying, nor diſowns my muſe
The feminine ſenſations of a heart
That often vibrates at another's woe.
The tear that trickles down the manly cheek,
The burſt of grief that braves control, the ſigh
Which baffles interception and eſcapes,
Soon as the ſolemn pauſe bids lift the pall
And eaſe the dead into his kindred earth,
Send many a tingling arrow through this breaſt,

Though the reluctant eye no grief betray,
And tearleſs ſilence in her deepeſt gloom
The decent pleaſurable ſecret hide.
But often as my ſated ſoul ſurveys
The ſable funeral of city pomp,
Methinks life human is a play indeed,
And the poor player Man, exhauſted, ſpent,
Has made his exit, and now comes the *farce*.
Tis pantomimic ſhew— the nodding plume,
The proud eſcutcheoned hearſe, and long parade
Of dry-eyed mourners clad in inky cloaks,
The ſtreaming crape, and diſmal aiſle behung
With ſable manufacture ill-applied.
To ſee ſuch idle waſte, and childiſh ſhew,
I ſmile and nothing grieve. Not ſo, when death

Calls for the hind, and undiſſembled grief
Of father, widow, offspring, to the grave
His decent corpſe attends. Then through my ſoul
Exquiſite ſympathy's vibration thrills;
It ſorrows freely, breathes the grateful ſigh,
Nor ſcorns to utter from a heart ſubdued
The mourner's luxury, the deep alas!
Enough of *painful pleaſure*. Now alive,
Thee let me ſing, ſtill manſion of my birth.
The ſwelling inſtep of the mountain's foot
Above the vale juſt lifts thee. Thy trim gate,
Thy candid aſpect and pale-chimneyed roof
Some eminence beſpeak, and mark thee chief
Of the lone hamlet that behind thee ſquats.
Thou ſeem'ſt a bride, and this thy nuptial day,

And theſe thy mute attendants leſs attired.
Graceful to them thy fair ingenuous face
And bolder footſtep, but not leſs to thee
Their modeſt air becoming. Ev'ry roof,
Or farm or cottage, ev'ry tree and ſhrub,
Paſture and garden-plot, which tread thy heel
Deſcending from the hill, thy charms improve.
I ſee where Flora her full lap of ſweets
Has ſtrewed before thee, prodigally kind.
I mark the wreath laburnum without hand
Weaves for thy brow, the lilac tuft ſublime
That ſhades thy temples, and the nodding flow'rs
Of roſe and woodbine which his leaf o'ertop
To ſcreen thine eyelids from the weſtern beam.
Beauty concealed is beauty thrice improved.

And plainneſs ſelf, if plainneſs be thy lot,
Is not to be reproved, when nature thus
Adorns deformity with flowery charm.

Welcome, dear manſion of repoſe and eaſe,
Still nurſe of letters. To the ſtudious mind
The vale of ſolitude is world enough;
A world of many *pleaſures*, many friends,
Of buſtle, and reſort without fatigue.
E'en the ſlow-marching ſabbath, by the gay
Devoted ill to frivolous exceſs,
Or dedicated fondly by the grave
To endleſs exerciſe of pious toil,
Has here no hurried and no loit'ring foot.
Abridged of levity and indiſpoſed
To make ſalvation ſlavery, and yawn

Till lateſt midnight o'er the long diſcourſe,
It interdicts not recreation ſweet;
But, holy worſhip and the preacher's ſaw
Duly attended, gives to ſacred ſong,
To converſation, anthem, ſlight reſearch,
Or loud peruſal of ill-printed news,
The ſacred reſidue of ambling day.
Alone, of men, dwells here the thoughtful bard.
Here, on the mountain ſtationed, to the deep,
That proudly thund'ring on his one hand foams,
The lyre's indignant chorus ſweeps he now;
Now to the peaceful variegated weald,
That underlies his other, tinkles ſoft
Deſcriptive admiration of her charms.
He ſings her every ſteeple, farm, and field,

Till, like the proſpect, his expiring ſong,
Mellowed and ſoftened, ſteals away from ſenſe,
And ill-perceived runs melting into air.

How awful this proud height, this brow of brows
Which every ſteep ſurmounts, and awes ſublime
The ſubject downs below! Nature wears here
Her boldeſt countenance. The tumid earth
Seems as of yore it had the phrenſy fit
Of Ocean caught, and its uplifted ſward
Performed a billowy dance, to whoſe vaſt wave
The proudeſt ſurges of the bellowing deep
Are little, as to his profounder ſwell
The ſhallow rippling of the wrinkled pool.
Enormous family, gigantic hoſt,
Nation of mountains, ſublime people, ſay,

At what great feſtival did your high brows
And ample foreheads dignify the dance?
When welcomed ye rebounding the great God
In mercy preſent? Or, if wrath came down,
When boiled ſo furiouſly your molten ſward
Fuſed at the touch of his indignant foot?
When did the God, departing, with a frown
Congeal and froſt-fix your prodigious limbs,
Leaving remembrance which no time ſhall 'raſe
Of ire omnipotent here dealt around?
Or if at firſt with wonder-working hand
He formed you thus, ſay where is the vaſt ſcoop
By which theſe ample vales and combs profound
Were hollowed? Where is the ſtupendous axe
Which cleft the ſhoulders of yon bulky cliffs?

Who the vaſt hoſt of precipices linked,
To fetter frantic ocean to his ſeat?
Where is the mighty delving tool that piled
High as the clouds this lofty mount ſupreme,
And yon his twin companion, way between
To the neat ſtream permitting, as ſhe trips
To wed her ſober ſpouſe the tranquil Ouſe?
Where is the car that bore the hills away
To make yon ample baſin, bowl immenſe,
Vaſt amphitheatre of ſky-crown'd downs,
Where oft the hurried waters loſe their way,
And ſpreading wide become an inland ſea
Land-lock'd by mountains? Where is the ſtrong bar
Which looſen'd ſeaward the contiguous hills,
Hove them aſide, and gave to Ouſe between

Sufficient ſpace for his mæand'ring ſtream
To wind and wander, and to many a farm,
Village and ſteeple, viſitation pay,
Or e'er he pours into the diſtant deep,
Through the wide fauces of yon hiant cliffs,
Th' obſequious lake that urges him along?
Here let me ſtand and wonder at my God,
Nor look with inſolent diſdain on man;
Since, feeble as his efforts are, his works
Puny and ill-diſtinguiſhed, yet e'en they
Add grace and beauty to the nobleſt ſcene.
What were the deep, if his cerulean ſwathe
Bound only, as a girdle, unadorned,
The hills that baffle his circumfluent wave?
Owes he no beauty to the paſſing fleet

With ſwelling canvaſs o'er his ſteril void
Tilting triumphant, intercepted oft
By the white promontory's brow ſublime,
And oft apparent where the cultured vale
'Tween cliff and cliff with ample op'ning yawns?
Owes he no majeſty, when ev'ning ſooths
The tranquil waters, and dun quiet reigns,
To the ſtout convoy's peremptory flaſh
Diſtinct precurſor of a voice profound
Enforcing mandate not pronounced in vain,
But ſoon aſſembling her diſparted fleet;
As (if to great things ſmall may be compared)
Troops to the partridge at her ev'ning call
Her ſcattered brood Septembrian, thunder-ſcared?
Owes he no grandeur to the warrior bark

With ſail impetuous as the falcon's wing
Chaſing her foe, and blazing from her ſide
The ſmoky thunder-peal, awhile ſuſtained,
Awhile replied to, till her enſign couched,
Implies ſubmiſſion and a foe ſubdued?
Yes, theſe have dignity, and much delight,
And cheat of length and wearineſs the way,
As from this eminence my foot deſcends
Homeward to roam o'er intervenient hills.
Oft on the ſunny upland let me pauſe
That overlooks the hamlet, and, with tube
Improving viſion to the brow applied,
Take my laſt farewel of the fleet remote,
Ere I deſcend into the vale beneath.
With ſight ſtill aided let me home ſurvey,

Well-pleaſed if Madam at her door appear
Watching her ſon's return with double eyes,
Twain ſupplemental, ſtriding o'er the noſe,
And with affectionate extended arm
Claſping the temple and ſuperior ear.
Pleaſed alſo, if but Puſs upon the ſill
Be ſeen adorning, with aſſiduous tongue
Cleanſing her taper ſhank, her dappled coat
And furry boſom, or with gentle paw
Laving her countenance and hindmoſt ear.
Thus, thou dear village, ſometimes let me ſtand,
The ding-dong peal of thy twain bells remote
To hear, and ſee thy ſunday cottager
In his white frock, thy ſcarlet-mantled dame,
Thy luſty farmer in his brown ſurtout,

And all thy mingled people, well-attired,
Church-ward repairing from their ſcattered homes.
Prudent aſſemblers, warmly ſhall the muſe
Your piety applaud, and would to God
None ever lingered in the haunts obſcene
Of lewd ebriety, for ever loſt
To the ſtill voice of truth; and would to God
Of you that hear the word none heard in vain,
But all obedient at the holy board
Aſſembled duly at their paſtor's call.
Would too, that none, preferring draff to grain,
On the fond cobler's conventicle drawl
With admiration fed, and the full cup
Of barbarous intoxication ſwilled.

My native vale, in loveliness arrayed,
Now let me paint thee, while the mower's scythe
Thine herbage levels, harvest first conferred
And least solicited, spontaneous gift,
Abundance for the beast that toils for man.
Thick swarms the field with tedders, tossing high
And spreading thin upon the sunny sward
The lock dishevelled. Frequent is the maid
That trails the rake, and he that builds the cock,
Or, plunging deep his fork in every hill,
Bears it aloft uplifted to the load.
The team alternate to the peopled rick
Moves in procession, soon relieved, and soon
Alert returning to be fraught anew.

Now is it ſometimes *pleaſure* to ſteal forth
At ſultry midnoon, when the buſy fly
Swarms multitudinous, and the vex'd herd
Of milch-kine ſlumber in yon elm-grove ſhade,
Or unrecumbent exerciſe the cud
With milky mouths. Tis pleaſure to approach
And, by the ſtrong fence ſhielded, view ſecure
Thy terrors, Nature, in the ſavage bull.
Soon as he marks me, be the tyrant fierce—
To earth deſcend his head— hard breathe his lungs
Upon the duſty ſod— a ſulky leer
Give double horror to the frowning curls
Which wrap his forehead— and ere long be heard
From the deep cavern of his lordly throat
The growl inſufferable. Not more dread

And not more ſullen the profoundeſt peal
Of the far-diſtant ſtorm, which o'er the deep,
Clothed in the pall of midnight premature,
At ev'ning hangs, and jars the ſolid earth
With its remote exploſion. Tramples then
The ſurly brute, impatient of diſdain,
And ſpurns the ſoil with irritated hoof,
Himſelf inhaler of the duſty cloud,
Himſelf inſulted by the pebbly ſhower
Which his vain fury raiſes. Nothing feared,
Let him incenſed from agitated lungs
Blow his ſhrill trump acute, till echo ring,
And with a leer of malice ſteal away,
Aſſault and vengeance ſwearing ere be long.

When the bright orb of ruddy eve is ſunk,
And the ſlow day-beam takes its laſt farewel
Retiring leiſurely, how ſweet to mark
The watery ſcintillation of the ſtar
That firſt dares penetrate its flimſy ſkirt,
And, as the ſubtil medium ſteals away
Refined to nothing, bright and brighter glows!
How cheerful to behold the hoſt of night,
Encouraged by example, faſt revive,
And ſplendid conſtellations long extinct
In quick ſucceſſion kindle! Summer's night
Yields many a *pleaſure* to the poet's eye.
He loves to ramble when the vale is huſhed,
What time the preying owl with ſleepy wing
Swims o'er the cornfield ſtudious, unannoyed

By the fleet ſwallow to his chimney ſlunk,
Or marten to his eave; what time the bat
Hurries precipitous on leathern wing,
Briſk evolution in the duſky air
With ſudden wheel performing. With delight
He ſees the recent moon with horn acute
Faſt by the ſtar of ev'ning glow, to grace
The crimſon exit of departing day;
And ever with affection hails her beam,
Whether her kindled cheek appear on high,
As tranquil twilight dwindles, half illumed,
And, weſtward tending, down the ſteep of heaven
The chariot of retreating day purſue,
Or full-faced meet him on yon eaſtern hill,
Veiled if the ſun be preſent, or with meek

Uncurtain'd aſpect if his orb be ſunk.

Or whether, with reverted horn, her bow

Look eaſtward as the break of morning dawns,

And hide its ſlender elegance, abaſhed

At the bright egreſs of effulgent day.

Yes, the fond poet can with joy behold

Eve's dappled veſture in the roſy beam

Twice-dyed, and with the ruddier hues of light

In fold and border ſaturated well;

A rich illuminated crimſon ſtole

With ſanguine furbelow of molten gold.

With equal tranſport views his cheerful eye

The cloud of morning ſhot with purple ſtreaks;

Nor void of extacy obſerves on high

The fleece of ſilver in which decent night

Scarce veils her ſmiling orb, betraying oft
Through its diſhevelled border tranſient glimpſe
Of the pure ſtudded azure, or ſweet day
Of moonbeam unreſtrained. Some taſte of bliſs
May haply be derived from lurid night,
In diſmal weeds of ſaddeſt ſorrow dreſſed,
And ſhedding faſt from her maternal eye
Afflicted widowhood's celeſtial tear,
If unexpected the rent cloud diſplay
The pure cerulean cupola of heaven,
With dewy gems ſerene of ev'ry ſize
And ev'ry luſtre ſowed, not faint, nor few,
As when the horned moon ſhines clear, but bright
And numberleſs as the well-winnowed grain
The ploughman ſcatters, or the ſilky fall

Of the ſoft vernal ſhow'r that bids it ſpring,
Or dew-drops cheriſhing autumnal meads.
Sometimes the whirlwind's eddy let me ſee
The highway march, and with cylindric tube
The worried duſt inhaling lift it high,
A turbid vortex, ſwelling as it mounts,
And ſoon diſperſed in the wide field of heaven.
Anon the candent thunderbolt delights,
That tears the boſom of the ſultry cloud
And from its watery lap prone deluge ſheds.
Let the tempeſtuous Angel quit his hold
Upon the ſwealing fork, and pour ſublime
His thund'ring volley through the deep of heaven.
With vivid repetition gleam the flaſh,
And ever, as it kindles, ſally forth,

Abrupt and ruinous, the rolling peal,
As if, by lightning laſh'd, at ev'ry blaze
Shot forth a chariot from the throne of heaven,
And headlong bounded o'er the cloudy waſte.
The ſtorm ſubſided, and fair day returned,
Up to yon ſummit, that with haughty grace
Its wither'd turban wears of periſh'd heath,
On its rude forehead, filleted around,
Bearing diſtinct the trench of ancient war,
With ſlow and painful footſteps let me climb.
At length aſcended, on the central mount,
Erewhile perhaps the military throne
Of ſome proud monarch, and the ſpot revered
Whence the pavilion'd conqueror ſurveyed
His tented hoſt around him, loſt awhile

And muſing let me ſtand, to think, Where now
The leader and his army? prey alike
To the none-ſparing appetite of time.
Then let me feed with never-ſated eye
Upon the downy proſpect wide out-ſpread.
It ſhall not grieve me if the guſt be free,
And to withſtand its overbearing gale
I lean upon the tide of air unſeen.
For pleaſant then acroſs the vale below
Fleet the thin ſhadows of the ſever'd cloud,
Unwearied race performing. The blue deep
Wears wrinkled laughter, and exulting bounds
The ſhore along, with ſycophantic air
Welcoming faſhion to her loved retreat
Yon diſtant ſteeple, where ſhe ſits and ſmiles

And dips her foot into the wholeſome wave.

Thus on the July down in ſummer's noon
Let me lounge often, when the whiffling breeze,
The ſear hill ſweeping, ſings among the bents
That bruſh my footſteps, and make brighter ſtill
The poliſhed ſandal and its ſlippery ſole.
For then how beauteous lies the vale below,
Chequer'd with various harveſt, light and ſhade,
As o'er it ſails th' unnumber'd cloud of heaven!
How whiſpers, as it ſtoops, the blooming ear
Of the tall wheatfield ſlenderly erect,
And bows obſequious to the paſſing gale!
It ſeems a troubled ſea, that ſwells, and rolls,
And pours its green wave merrily along,
Or up the ſteep, or down the ſmiling ſlope,

Or o'er the plain, or through the valley's lap.

If noon be fervid and no zephyr breathe,

What time the new-ſhorn flock ſtands here and there

With huddled head, impatient of the fly—

What time the ſnuffling ſpaniel, as he runs,

Pants freely, and laps often at the brook

To ſlake the fervour of his feverous tongue—

What time the cow ſtands knee-deep in the pool,

Laſhing her ſides for anguiſh, ſcaring off,

With ſudden head reverſed, the inſect ſwarm

That baſks and preys upon her ſunny hide—

Or when ſhe flies with tufted tail erect

The breeze-fly's keen invaſion, to the ſhade

Scampering madly— let me wind my way

Tow'rd the ſtill lip of ocean. Seated there,

Soon let me caſt habiliment aſide,

And to the cool wave give me. Tranſport ſweet!

Pleaſure thrice-delicate! Oh, let me plunge

Deep in the lucid element my head,

And, riſing, ſportful on its ſurface play.

Oh joy, to quit the fervid gleam of earth,

Leave a faint atmoſphere, and ſoon recruit

Exhauſted energy, ſuſpended thus

Upon the boſom of a cooler world!

Oh recreation exquiſite, to feel

The wholeſome waters trickle from the head,

Oft as its ſaturated locks emerge!

To feel them lick the hand, and lave the foot!

And when the playful and luxurious limb

Is ſatiated with paſtime, and the man

Riſes refreſhed from the voluptuous flood,

How rich the pleaſure to let Zephyr chill

And ſteal the dew-drops from his panting ſides!

Let e'en the ſaucy and loud Auſter blow,

Be but his ſea not fierce, nor, ſave at ſhore,

The frothy breaker of diſpleaſure ſhew,

Yet will I court the turbulent embrace

Of thee, thou roaring deep: yes, and will ſhare

The bather's richeſt pleaſure, when the foot

Of fear might heſitate, nor dare invade

The thund'ring downfal of the billowy ſurge.

How joys the bold intruder, then, at large

To flounder porpoiſe-like, wave after wave

Mounting triumphant, hoiſted by the ſwell—

How climbs with eaſe, deſcends, and climbs again

Th' uplifted ſummit, high as it may ſeem,
Of the ſublimeſt wave! What if loſt earth
Each moment diſappear, as the ſunk head
Swims through the yawning hollow of the flood;
As often ſhall it greet the watchful eye,
Seen from the wave-top eminent. And when
Landward with weary ſtroke the patient arm
Oars him again in ſafety, how alert
Shall the ſtrand meet him, and his ſtreaming limbs
Reſcue from boiſt'rous ocean's foamy jaws;
Defiance bidding to his ſavage howl,
His ivory tooth unſheathed, his ſullen bark,
And fiery look delirious, ſymptoms all
Of madneſs imminent! Lo! as we ſpeak,
The wolfiſh monſter kindles into rage!

Enormous maſtiff, how he gnaws his chain
And ſtruggles to be free, faſt bound by fate,
And never more to be let looſe on man!
Aloud he bellows, with indignant paw
Dances upreared, and menaces the foot
Of earth with trembling diffidence protruded.
Lo! the ſaliva of his deafening tongue
Her pebbled inſtep ſtains! his rugged coat
Is whiten'd o'er with foam, waſted amiſs
In the vain effort of his hoarſe aſſault!
Chain'd tyrant, ſpare thy fury, or unfeared
Growl the long night away. To morrow's ſun
Shall find thee gentler, and a ſecond dawn
Shall quell thy raving fit, and make thee calm,
Tame, and obſequious as the fondeſt cur

That cringing fawns and licks the ſteps of man.

Not ſuch thy phrenſy, when the northern gale,
Borne ſoftly ſeaward, the tyrannic ſurge
Here firſt aſſuaging, ſooths into a ſmile
Thy frantic countenance, thy ſurly frown
Appeaſes, thy white tooth and ſnarling jaw
Foamy with vengeance cloſes, and thy tongue
Bids ſpaniel-like with paraſitic kiſs
Lave inoffenſive the long peaceful ſhore.
How placid then beneath the midday ſun
Shines thy pure azure level undiſturbed!
How ſmooth and oily ſeems the path of Ouſe,
As unmoleſted round the weſtern cliff
He winds his way, nor mingles with the wave!
How ſteady ſails the bark, her every ſheet

Filled with the breeze! how fearleſs on the brink
Of the vaſt watery field, erewhile ſo rude,
Lets drop her anchor, furls her pliant ſail,
And waits the hour when thy more lifted plain,
And Ouſe retiring o'er the perilous bar,
Shall bear her ſmoothly up the brimful port!

Nor ſuch thy phrenſy, when the breeze at eaſt
Round yon tall promontories, yon vaſt chain
Of cliffs ſublime that gird Britannia's breaſt,
Than which her ſtedfaſt rock-encircled waiſt
Owns none more lofty, to the Thames-bound fleet
Blows adverſe. Safe beneath the muzzled mouths
Of yon twin parapets, whoſe weighty tubes
Menace the deep below, they moor ſecure,
And ride expectant of the proſp'rous gale.

Oft from yon hill ſuperior let me ſee
The peaceful anchorage of this wide bay
Thus by the wind-bound mariner poſſeſſed;
And chiefly, when the natal hour of GEORGE
Revolves well welcome in the wheel of time.
What pleaſure then to number one by one,
Floating in honour of the regal day,
Their lifted enſigns! to behold more near
On either parapet its furniſh'd ſtaff
Superbly waving; on the weſtern fort,
That from the cliffy precipice down looks
And war-locks imminent the mouth of Ouſe,
His ſtandard flaming; while the port beneath
On every ſtern a ſilken meteor ſhews!
How marks exulting then th' impatient eye

Where blazes firſt the ſulphur-breathing tube
Redundant cloud forth ſending, unctuous ſmoke,
Ere long ſucceeded by exploſion vaſt:
Earth-ſhaking gratitude, which bark to bark
Kindles in turn, till every deck is loſt
In brief eclipſe of its own thund'ring cloud!

THE FAVORITE VILLAGE.

BOOK II.

ARGUMENT of the SECOND BOOK.

The pleaſures of the favorite village during Autumn— the ſight of harveſt and its toils— of the ſhepherd digging bird-coops— of gleaners— of harveſt ſtill protracted in the flat country— of the midnight ſtorm in harveſt-time— of the harveſt moon riſing. The pleaſure of walking home late at night at this ſeaſon— of ſpending the evening at home— of walking out early in the morning of September— of liſtening to the drone— of pitying the brood— of hearing the equinoctial gale by night— of climbing the cliff the following morning— of viewing the ſea troubled as well as calm. Contemplations on the fall of the leaf.

THE FAVORITE VILLAGE.

BOOK II.

LET SUMMER 'gin decline, yet *pleaſure* ſtill
Shall with the poet dwell. Be the field brown:
No longer now ſtand ſmilingly erect
The bearded ear, or ſpike of nobler grain,
But, ſear alike, droop both, and hang the head,
And ſtoop the ſhoulder, to their annual toil
The keen hook calling and voracious ſcythe.
How groans the ſoil with its incumbent load!
Lo! in my native vale the reaper's hand
Gathers the fruitful ear and binds the ſheaf,
Betimes induſtrious, nor its endleſs taſk
Quits till the moon above the ſhadowy down

Lifts her bright orb to light him to repoſe.

Let morning dawn, and every village team

Comes forth to bear, or to the rick, or grange,

The ſhocks of plenty in arrangement meet

Along the briſtley ſtubble-field diſpoſed.

All hands are buſy, and one common ſpring

Of lively int'reſt actuates the ſcene.

Rouſed by example, induſtry at home

The ſecret impulſe of endeavour feels

And toils alert. The very ſhepherd churl,

Accuſtomed in the rear of his ſlow flock

To creep inert, or lean upon his crook

In vacant contemplation, or recline

And with his curs upon the mountain baſk,

Puts on agility, digs his long line

Of turf-turn'd coops along the ſunny brow,
Trims the ſlight ſpringe of hair, and neatly hides
Beneath the hollowed ſward his double nooſe.
So when the ſever'd cloud of airy day
Flits through the blue expanſe, and the bright orb
Wraps often in the veil of brief eclipſe,
The tim'rous wheatear, fearful of the ſhade,
Trips to the hoſtile ſhelter of the clod,
And where ſhe ſought protection finds a ſnare.
Poor heedleſs ſimpleton, to ſhun a foe
Void of annoyance, and deſtruction ſeek
Where danger leaſt was feared. Seized by the ſpringe,
She flutters for loſt liberty in vain,
A coſtly morſel, deſtined for the board
Of well-fed luxury, if no kind friend,

No gentle paſſenger the nooſe diſſolve,
And give her to the free-born wing again.
Incautious bird, ſuch as thy lot is now,
Such once was mine. By his arch foe beguiled,
Man ſlipt into the toil, and pitileſs death
Had in its ſtrong chain bound him. Yet found he
A kind deliverer who burſt his bonds,
And the vaſt price of reſtoration paid.
Divine preſerver, thine immenſe deſert
Shall my fond hand at diſtance imitate,
And to the feath'ry captive give releaſe,
The pence of ranſom placing in its ſtead.
Go, fool, be cheated of thy wing no more.
Freedom is thine, and *pleaſure* lives with me.

Yet, though it cheat the wheatear of its life,
Condemn not thou, my muſe, the ſullen cloud
Which often quenches in its gloomy folds
The ſultry beam of day, aſſuaging ſhade,
To him that reaps, and him that wields the ſcythe,
Or plies the fork, or builds the load, or trails
The ling'ring rake embarraſſed, at high noon
Affording freely. Opportune the ſhield
His canopy beſtows; and ſhelter'd thus
Toil becomes nimble, induſtry alert,
And the wide field reechoes with the ſound
Of merriment indulged, and not repreſſed
By Autumn's ſuffocating heat intenſe.
The treader of the mow enjoys within
The mitigated air, nor finds the grange

A melting oven, by the ſultry load
Freſh from the field with double heat ſupplied,
Till Hell ſeem preſent, wanting but its flames,
And thirſt inſatiable his duſty lip
And ſtrangled fauces without mercy parch.
Now let the reaper, tawny with his toil,
Cut with unwearied hook and eager graſp
The laſt unlevel'd acre, and enjoy
To ſee the village ſtreet pour forth its dames
And laughing little ones, to glean at large
Where'er the huddled ſheaf once ſtood erect.
How glows the heart to dwell upon the ſcene,
When harveſt thus enlivens every field
That girds the hamlet round, when ſport and toil
Seem hand in hand, and *pleaſure* lives with all.

Thy early grain, my native valley, houſed,
Still with protracted *pleaſure* the fond bard
Surveys the weald, on whoſe more chilly lap
Brown harveſt loiters. With recruited joy
Marks he the fervent buſtle of the field,
And greets anew the ſickle, and the ſwain
Who, to his fair ſhirt peeled, from duſky dawn
To lateſt twilight gathers the full ear,
And reaping fills, or girding plants erect
The multitudinous ſheaf. How full of cheer,
Joyous, devout, and grateful is the ſoul,
To ſee again its unexhauſted God
Thus pile the table of a world with bread.
For what's the globe on which we all ſubſiſt?
The table of immortal bounty 'tis,

A feaſt perpetual, where unnumber'd ſons
Sit down to banquet as their ſires withdraw,
And in ſucceſſion generations feed,
Contented riſe, give thanks, and paſs away.

Awful the *pleaſure* now, if midnight ſtorm
Illuminate with quick repeated flaſh
Valley and hill, to catch a ſudden glimpſe
Of tree and hedge-row, village, field and ſhock,
Dancing in lightning's tranſitory gleam:
To ſee the thunder-bolt with fiery arm
Arreſt the mountain top and ſweal his brow,
While round the ſultry theatre of heaven
The peal impatient rides, and ſteeds of gloom
Whirl his benighted car from pole to pole.

Be night ſerene, and her fair moon replete,
And other *pleaſures* ſhall the bard attend.
Planet of harveſt, oft in the dun eaſt
Thy full autumnal orb let me behold
As from a furnace riſing red with heat,
And, while it mounts the purple ſteep of heaven,
Glowing more ardent, till it ſeem to reach
The point of fuſion, and, ſuſpended high,
A globe intenſe of molten bullion hang
Amid the gems of night. And let me hear,
As thy dim orb above the horizon ſwells,
The ſhout of harveſt-home, the loud huzza,
The natural hallelujah of the clown,
His chorus of thankſgiving for releaſe.

Now let me mark civility's arrears
Where'er recorded, and repay at eve
The long-due visit to the distant friend,
That, by the full orb lighted, I may march
Mute and contemplative at leisure home.
Mild be the temp'rature of heav'n, serene
The silent atmosphere. Let fancy deem
She feels the moon-beam warm. Be nothing heard,
Save the far-distant murmur of the deep—
Or the near grasshopper's incessant note
That snug beneath the wall in comfort sits,
And chirping imitates the silvery chink
Of wages told into the ploughman's palm—
Or gentle curlew bidding kind good night
To the spent villager, or e'er his hand

The cottage taper quench— or grazing ox
His dewy ſupper from the ſavoury herb
Audibly gathering— or cheerful hind
From the loved harveſt feaſt returning home,
Whiſtling at intervals ſome ruſtic air,
Or at due diſtance chanting in the vale
Exhilarated ſong. Such rural ſounds,
If haply noticed by the muſing mind,
Sweet interruption yield, and thrice improve
The ſolemn luxury of idle thought.

Oft at yon huddled town, that guards remote
The ſounding ſhip-yard and contiguous port,
By ſweet civility detained, the bridge,
At ſuch late hour returning, let me paſs;
What time aloft the moon, no more rotund,

Shines gibbous o'er the pure and ſtill expanſe
Of tide-uplifted Ouſe, and lends to Night
An ample mirror, where her ſober eye,
Her twinkling jewelry and face ſerene
Thrice placid and thrice beauteous, may behold.
If not abroad I ſit, but ſip at home
The cheering beverage of fading eve,
By ſome fair hand, or e'er it reach the lip,
With mingled flavour tinctur'd of the cane
And Aſiatic leaf, let the mute flock,
As from the window ſtudious looks mine eye,
Steal foldward nibbling o'er the ſhadowy down,
And take their farewel of the ſavoury turf.
Let the reluctant milch-kine of the farm
Wind ſlowly from the paſture to the pail.

Let the glad ox, unyoked, make haſte to field,
And the ſtout wain-horſe, of encumbrance ſtript,
Shake his enormous limbs with blund'ring ſpeed,
Eager to gratify his famiſhed lip
With taſte of herbage, and the meadow brook.

To him who in the beam of morning walks,
How lovely bloſſoms the September roſe,
Which, unexpected, 'mid his flow'rleſs ſhrubs
Unfolds its bluſhing ſolitary bud,
Humid with autumn's equinoctial tear,
And, bowing with the gale, the treaſured dew
Sheds in abundance from its leaning cup!
To him not pleaſureleſs, as o'er the down
He roams contemplative, the myſtic ſpot
Where fable dreams the midnight fairies dance,

A ring of deepeſt verdure, thick beſet
With muſhrooms roſy-gilled and clothed in ſnow;
Seats for the wearied fay perhaps, minute,
If ample, tables for the royal feaſt
Of Mab and Oberon. Such poor account
Gives baffled reaſon, in her childiſh mood,
Of the myſterious cauſe that wields unſeen
The compaſſes of heaven, and circumſcribes
The free fantaſtic circle of the hill.

Not without *pleaſure* hears the bard the voice
Of drone inert, from the rich hive diſmiſſed,
Seeking apartments in the riven wall
Of ſome old edifice, and ſounding loud
His drowſy horn at the convenient mouth
Of augre-hole profound, his beſt retreat,

There long to ſleep and winter's ſtorm defy.
Not ſuch delight affords the ſenſeleſs fowl,
Which now, with ſedulous maternal care,
Her brood of twitt'ring little ones leads forth,
And fondly cautions. Grievous is the ſight,
However welcome when ſoft ſpring prevails,
Now to behold her from the ſecret neſt
The cheerful troop conducting. Silly bird,
It is the ſun of autumn, not of prime,
Whoſe foſt'ring beam invigorates awhile
Thy happy race. Tis not the ſmile of May,
But faint October flattery, ſoon fled.
Or e'er to morrow's ſun in clouds deſcend,
The ſhow'ry occident's o'erwhelming guſt
Thee and thy hovered train ſhall almoſt drown,

Be ſhelter'd as thou wilt. And if thou 'ſcape
The deluge prone-deſcending, the keen North
Shall pinch them bitterly; for now the breeze
The morning bluſh provokes on beauty's cheek,
And nature's own inimitable roſe
Gives to the human face angelic charms.

Unwelcome howls the equinoctial gale
To him who hears it on his orchard floor
Shower the midnight apple or the pear.
But not unwelcome to the pilfering boy
Blows the rude hurricane, who pockets ſnug
The batter'd windfall, whether pear or plumb,
Apple or walnut, and in ſecret feaſts;
Nor to the ſwine, perchance, who ſhares his ſpoil,
Or finds beneath the oak a plenteous meal

Of acorns thraſh'd and winnowed by the gale.
Nor more unwelcome howls the ſtorm to me.
Pleaſant the hearth and converſe ſnug within,
While the nocturnal tempeſt raves without,
For entrance buffeting the ſaſh in vain;
And while the ſullen ſhower from the drench'd eaves
Drips faſt, and on the flooded pavement ſpanks.
In ſuch a night, who feels not heav'n his friend,
To bleſs him with a warm ſecure abode
Impervious to the blaſt and chilly ſhower?
Who feels it not vaſt privilege, to ſit
And court the glowing embers of his hearth,
Till at his bidding their aſpiring flames
Illuminate and cheer his fartheſt room?
Who deems it not rich *pleaſure*, then, to read

By the clear taper unannoyed, or ſweep
The ſtrings of harmony unvex'd, and hear
At ev'ry pauſe the perſevering ſtorm
Rave at his window, in his chimney howl?
Who thinks his lot unhappy, then, to ſup
At an ill-furniſh'd board, whoſe only fare
Springs from the dairy and the winnowed floor?
Who deems not ſhelter and a cruſt a feaſt,
To the hard fate of him who plods without
Fatigued and weather-foiled, or his more hard
Who wreſtles with inclement ſkies above
And toſſing ſeas beneath, nor dares retire,
Fearful of ſhipwreck, till the dawn returns?
Is he not lap'd in Paradiſe, who thinks,
Ere ſlumber cloſe his eyes, how others toil,

While peace and comfort curtain him around?

If morn, attended by the ſtorm, awake,

Glad let me mount the cloud-invading cliff,

Which from the hollow of the vale beneath

Suddenly ſprings, as if Britannia here

Firſt roſe inſurgent on the tyrant deep,

And her vaſt limbs to his aſſault oppoſed.

There let me mark the conflict, from above,

When, by the tempeſt aided, Ocean ſacks

And wears the precipice with giant war:

When the grim thunder-cloud aſſault upholds,

And with his forky bolt and roaring peal

E'en to its baſe the cloven mountain ſhakes.

There alſo let me ſometimes ſtand, when peace

Reigns in the vale below, and view well-pleaſed

The quiet element that ſmiles beneath,
Image of patience, as the cygnet's down
Gentle and inoffenſive. Far extends,
And far as it outſtretches lies unmoved
The marble flood, a ſpacious pavement, ſmooth
And fairly poliſhed. Tis the floor of heaven,
Which none but God's own foot preſumes to tread.

Tide of the falling leaf, let others ſing
Of thy ten thouſand tints; I love them not.
Oft as I mark upon the woody vale
The hue rubiginous of faſt decline,
I ſigh to think how ſoon the lovely ſcene
Shall paſs away, how ſoon the whiffling gale
Shall ſtrip its faded honours from the grove,
And whirl them in its tyrant mood aloft,

Or idly ſweep and hurry them along
Through park and paradiſe, or urge them fierce
Into the dank and ſolitary pit.
Yes, I could wail aloud, ſhed very tears,
And ſtamp for anguiſh at a ſcene like this.
Once only loves my ſoul to ſee the gale
Seize the dry leaf and worry it along—
When the dwarf oak, that all the winter through
Has ſtood tenacious of its withered pride,
And the ſear beech, of its old whiſp'ring ſpoils
Alike retentive, ſheds them to the breeze,
Erelong intending to be fairer clothed
And with more lovely foliage grace the wood.
I could thy perſecution then enjoy,
Thou playful guſt, that hurries from my ſight

The periſh'd leaf of the departed year.

I could the ling'ring fugitive purſue,

Howl after him like thee, and bid him hide

His ugly aſpect in the darkſome cave.

But ſhall I join thee now, or praiſe the cry

Which haſtens Autumn to an early fall,

Which ruins elegance, and rural pride,

And all the eye and all the heart adores

Of beauty that adorns the ſummer vale?

No, let me mourn thy rapid tyranny

That lays the proſpect waſte, and bid thee urge

With more becoming zeal the loit'ring ſteps

Of uncouth Winter, ſhrugging at the blaſt,

And ſlow approaching with froſt-bitten heel,

Step after ſtep, from his cold Arctic cell.

THE FAVORITE VILLAGE.

BOOK III.

ARGUMENT of the THIRD BOOK.

The pleaſures of the favorite village during Winter— Amuſing preſages of ſtormy weather— The winter tempeſt deſcribed, as a cauſe of pleaſure— the agitated ſea— its invaſion of the Pariſh-clerk— The pleaſure of viewing the port and its mercantile labours— Reflections on the ſun and moon— Pleaſures of the Winter's morning— of the Winter's walk— the rainbow &c.— Froſt and its pleaſures— the clear-ſhining moon— the rime, and its thaw— boys ſliding— Reflections on the power of froſt— The fall of ſnow— its intermiſſion— its final ceſſation— The pleaſure of walking out when it has ſubſided, and obſerving various animals— Chriſtmas and its pleaſures— the boy ſinging carols— The return of fog and thaw— gradual diſappearance of the ſnow— Pleaſure of viewing the leafleſs wood— Agreeable ſymptoms of Spring not far diſtant, ſeen in different flowers— in the improving warmth of the ſun— in the length of the days. The pleaſure of walking in the ſunſhine— and obſerving the firſt bloom that begins to appear.

THE
FAVORITE VILLAGE.

BOOK III.

YET WINTER has its *pleaſures*. Tis delight
To mark the ſymptom of his frequent ſtorm.
Not ſeldom, previous to the morrow's ſhower,
A flaky vapour the pure æther ſtreaks;
As if ſome painter of gigantic arm
Had dipped his bruſh into the foamy wave,
Charged it with colour from the cliff, and daſh'd
With wanton levity a milky bow
Acroſs the dome of heav'n. Nor ſometimes ſeems
His ſaucy hand with ſingle ſtroke content,
But daubs with quick return the azure arch,
Upon the bleſſed canopy ſublime

Vagaries flouriſhing, unſteady ſtreaks,
Such, with her beſom, round the morning hearth,
As giddy bar-maid faſhions, trailing briſk
Her childiſh fancies o'er the ſanded floor.
If yet the ſeaſon to his race be kind,
Sharp ſtings the minor fly, chirurgeon keen,
With lancet petulant the manly ſhin
Provoking, oft repulſed, nor ſlaking well
His thirſt of blood, ere the vindictive hand
Of his vex'd patient fall, and with a friſk
The ſmall phlebotomiſt indignant cruſh.
Forth from her haunt obſcene, offenſive ſight!
Wanders Arachne, ſable, filthy, vaſt.
Forth creeps the ling'ring ſnail; a ſilvery line,
Mæand'ring devious o'er the plaiſter'd wall,

Marks his pituitous and ſlimy courſe.

With tardy ſhell and tender horn outſtretch'd

He ſeeks the far-off leaf. Aloud and oft

The cock high-mounted with applauding wing

Sounds his clear trump, prophetic of the ſhower;

While the daw people numerous, with plumes

Rapid and audible, the valley ſkim

Or flock-fed down, or round the ſteeple ſail,

Startling by fits the meditating ear

With mingled outcry of ten thouſand throats.

Tight ſtretch'd, where'er ſuſpended, or in croft,

Or ſunny garden, or contiguous field,

Appears the cord the buſy laundreſs ſtrains.

Far off reſounds the ſhore-aſſailing deep,

Sweeping with rude concuſſion the looſe beach

Harſhly ſequacious of his refluent ſurge.
Sails landward, high uplifted, the grey hoſt
Of wide-wing'd ſea-mews, in their gyrous flight
Oft intermingling, and repeating oft
Sounds which the diſtant inexperienced ear
Might deem the cry of eager hounds remote.
Loud on the brink of her foul puddle quacks
The clam'rous duck, while her more ſilent lord,
With his green gloſſy nape, aſſiduous oils
His ſhining beak, and ſpreads the thin defence
With nice preciſion o'er his thirſty plumes.
So falls the ſhower in vain, and he ſecure
Stalks in the deluge and defies it all,
The fine dew trickling from his ſides unfelt;
Nor needs, like chanticleer and his vex'd dames,

To hurry homeward when the flood deſcends,
To hang the tail, or ſeek the ſhed forlorn,
And ſhake the moiſture from his madid wings.
Nothing impaired, with clean and ruddy leg
Through ev'ry plaſh he wades, with chatt'ring beak
Fiſhes the miry ſhallow as he goes;
Or ſtrays at large upon the dewy mead
In queſt of ſnail, of ſlug, and winding worm;
Or, launching from the ſhore his feathered fleet,
Pilots his dames along the flooded dyke.

As, when the daw throng on the ſteeple perch,
Ambitious of its loftieſt vane, and ſmoke
Shot upwards from the funnel mounts erect,
Fair day ſucceeds, ſo when the turbid ſtream
That iſſues from the chimney, falls depreſſed,

And travels fog-like o'er the dewy field,
While at a diſtance the loud weſtern bell
Diſtinctly ſings, day foul and pluvious comes.
Dim the nocturnal ſky; its feebler lights
Loſt in the denſe profound, its brighter gems
Obſcurely viſible. If chance the moon
Croſs the quench'd Empyrean, her ſad orb
Shines with abated beam, and ſeems to wear
A miſty atmoſphere. Far in the void
An ampler circle with capacious zone
Her central diſc encloſes. Spiritleſs
At his round table ſits the farmer lord;
A drowſy yawn his pipe-inhaling jaws
Relaxes often. At his foot the cur
Sleeps on the hearth outſtretch'd, and yelping dreams;

Or lifts his head, aſtoniſh'd at the dance
Of friſking puſs, who on the ſanded floor
Gambols exceſſive. Such ere cloſe of day
Were the wild antics of the frantic herd
(Alike prophetic of the morrow ſtorm)
Who leap'd, and raced, and bellowed in the mead,
And claſh'd their horny foreheads, ſtaring fierce.
Dim in the ſocket burns the ſulky wick,
Nor heeds the trimming hand, which oft divides
The kindled fibres of its nape in vain,
And to the oil redundant, that would drown
Its feeble flame, relieving ſluice affords.
At length the long-expected tempeſt comes.
His ancient phrenſy has the maniac deep
Seized, and with loud reverberating foot

He dances rampant in his thund'ring hall.
His gloomy frown that darkens earth and heaven,
And foamy gnaſhing jaw, foretel erelong
Madneſs enormous to enſue. E'en now
He gnaws with keen exaſperated tooth
The rock that holds him ſhorebound to his ſeat,
Buffets the pier and baſis of the cliff,
Seizes the tilting triple-maſted bark,
Light as a feather in his pow'rful graſp,
Kindles her ſleeping thunder, and enjoys
Her frequent flaſhes of nocturnal woe.
Wellnigh omnipotent, on the ſunk reef,
Where roars the conflict of eternal ſtorm
And wave o'ertumbles wave in foamy fall,
He toſſes furious her reluctant crew,

Snatches the quiver from the hand of heaven,
Scatters the glaring lightnings o'er their heads,
And pours the forceful thunder-peal around.
Pleaſed at her fate, he aggravates the ſtorm,
Bellows profound, roars horrible delight,
And bids the billow oft repeat the blow,
Till with unchainable gigantic arm
He thruſts her headlong to the deepmoſt Hell.
What greater *pleaſure*, thou terrific deep,
Than when thy lifted tide proclaims aloud
The lunar orb renewed or at its hour
Of plenitude arrived, on thy bleak verge
To ſtand obſervant of the tumbling ſwell,
Enormous cataract from cliff to cliff
Thund'ring along indignant! High in air

Flaſhes the plunging downfall as it flies.
Its foamy vengeance to the topmoſt ſhore
Impétuous ruſhes, but ere long recedes,
Raking with harſh recoil the pebbly ſteep,
And ſcarce ſubmitting to the monſtrous ſurge
That next uplifts its overtumbling ſwell
And flound'ring hurries o'er the wave relapſed.
Feel'ſt thou no pleaſure that thou ſit'ſt aloof
To whine and ſhudder, Friſk? There quake and pine,
Nor come obedient when thy maſter's lip
Kind invitation whiſtles, ill agreed
Sprawling aloft to meet the ſalient wave.
Not ſuch thy ſpirit, when inſulted puſs
Scampers the garden path, and climbs alert
The high eſpalier, there to ſwell and ſwear,

Or, in cloſe corner pent, upheaves her coat,
And bluſt'ring cuffs thee with vindictive claw.
Nor ſuch thy ſpirit, when the nimble hare
Starts from her ſeat and ſcuds along the down,
Or when thy delicate and buſy ſenſe
Traces the covey in the morning dew,
Which ſudden riſes and with whirring wing
And chuckling outcry hurries down the vale.

The winter ſea's inſufferable fall
Who not admires, and his ſurmounting wave,
Proudly rebellious, when the ſable reef
Or foamy ſhallow intercepts his march?
How wreſtles with the rock the billowy tide!
How ſtorms with wanton fury the worn cliff!
How on the ſolid everlaſting ſhore

Pours its loud cataract of thunder down!
Oft in that perilous and ſtormy hour,
Upon the fartheſt pier, whoſe daring pile
Strides far into the flood, and braves the ſurge
Of the wild ocean in its angrieſt mood,
In tremuluos enjoyment let me ſtand;
What time the gale with clamour-laden wing
Blows ſtiff and ill reſiſted, daſhing fierce
The wave prodigious on his oaken breaſt,
Or ſmites oblique his everlaſting ſide,
His chain of ribs enormous, ſhow'r profuſe
Of the vex'd waters on his lofty cheſt
Heavily pouring. Then who ſtands to ſee
Muſt ill-defended ſhrink within the verge
Of the ſtrong work that ſhudders at the blow,

And undercreep the cope high overblown
Of vaulting waters, or abide ill-pleaſed
Bath inſtantaneous in a drown'd ſurtout.
Thou awful element, my ſoul adores
Thy furious hour, and with exceſſive joy
Marks thine invaſion, when the graſp of God
Quits its reſtraint upon the turbid ſwell,
And pours almighty to the topmoſt ſtrand
In deluge mountainous the milky ſurge.
How hurries headlong the tumultuous tide,
At that dread moment, through his foamy jaws
Into the mouth of Ouſe! how ſpreads around
Its dying wave within the flooded port!
Forlorn and waterlock'd ſtands the lone mill
In the mid-lake apparent, cloſe beſieged,

By fearful inundation girded round.

Then with what joy, thou proud uplifted deep,

Turn I to look upon thy glorious wave

That tumbles, foams, and thunders round the bay.

The mighty downfall, forcing from its ſeat

Th' incalculable pebble, piles it high,

Againſt it ſwells, and ſwelling upward heaves

With ſhoulder irreſiſtible the mound,

Till the controlling moon bids haſte away

And rage indignant upon other ſhores.

Then leiſurely withdraws the flound'ring ſurge,

And a chaſte ceſtus of unſullied beach,

Of ev'ry feculence and foulneſs purged,

The waiſt of ocean girds. How battles then

The furious Ouſe conflicting with the wave!

How rears his waters, and the ſaucy ſwell
Inſulting buffets, overpow'rs his wrath,
And headlong hurries the diſordered flood!
The main retiring plays along the ſhore;
As ſports the giant whale with the ſalt wave,
Inhaling and again repelling quick
The life-ſupporting tide, ſo ſucks the deep
With repercuſſion harſh the pebbly beach
Into his foamy jaws, and ſo diſpels.
By the ſtrong action of his forceful lungs
The flint itſelf, made ſleek, becomes rotund
And ſilky to the touch: the very rock,
Hard-hearted though he ſeem, is ſmooth'd without;
And the ſoft pebble, by colliſion worn,
No angular aſperity betrays.

Not always innocent the ſtormy tide
That thus, aſcending from the chafed abyſs,
Bellows tremendous. In the watery flat,
Under the ſhelter of the mill-pool wall,
Behold yon humble and ſuccinct abode.
There dwelt of late reſponſe-pronouncing ſage
The village clerk parochial, nothing rich.
Forty long years he delved into the ſoil,
Threw up the crumbled bone and lipleſs ſcull,
Shaped to the coffin his well-finiſh'd work;
And eaſed into the grave the ſilent corpſe,
Commending duſt to duſt. Still ſprang anew
The tranſient offspring of deciduous man,
And ſtill by his all-overwhelming ſpade
Were ſheltered deep beneath the holy ſward.

Thrice fell his pulpit lord, and he, who ſheds
Now on each infant cheek baptiſmal dew,
In his long recollection was a child
Borne but a day ſince to the font himſelf.
There lived the ſage, there died. But ere he died,
Strong blew the ſouthern gale; the naked branch
Loud howling wreſtled with the pow'rful guſt,
And ocean wroth his terrifying voice
Utter'd profound. The ſhore-aſſailing wave
Uplifted ſwelled prodigious, and his bound
With foamy far-ſhot indignation ſcaled.
The practicable breach, by lunar aid,
O'erflowing Ouſe in his ſurmounted wall
Erelong effected, and the valley ſwam.
Diſtreſs acute the pious houſhold ſeized,

To ſee their ſupellectile treaſures float
In playful dance around, to ſee the flood
Yet ruſhing inward, and the hiſſing grate
Now quenching, filling now the mouth
Of oven ſeldom fed, and now the ſmall
And lowly caſement laving with its wave.
Deſpair of ſafety by aſcent was there;
For ah! the low-roofed meſſuage above earth
No ſtory boaſted, and no ſtair-way owned.
Drown'd was the tenement, and almoſt drown'd
The holy habitant. But wreck was none,
Save of domeſtic chattels, here and there
In culinary whirlpool ſwimming few.
So battled ocean with the tuneful ſage.
Not ſuch thine enterprize, indignant flood,

When by the reſolute ſhore-ſhaking God
To battle ſummon'd, thine imperious ſurge
With tow'ring deluge the victorious hoſt
Of ſtone-ſtunn'd Hector to his Troy repulſed.
The ſight of Winter's ſuperb ocean left,
Me *pleaſes* much the buſtle of the port;
The toil and clamour of the proſp'rous bark,
Safe landing on the wharf with briſk diſpatch
Her ſable cargo from the northern mine;
The neater veſſel her capacious lap
Filling with grain or (ſtowage ponderous)
The mealy ſack of the contiguous mill,
Welcome ſupply to the far-diſtant camp,
Or wind-bound fleet of war; the ſlothful barge
Slug-like conveying from the ſloop her deals,

Another from the ſloven brig her load
Of nauſeous grocery, abundant ſtore
For ev'ry village on the banks of Ouſe,
And chiefly for yon borough built in air,
Whoſe ancient caſtle lifts its brow ſublime
To frown upon the flood they croſs below.
Brief is the day, but, ſhorten'd as it is,
Sweet meditation to the muſe affords.
Long on the ſullen forehead of the morn
The frown of darkneſs dwells, prolonging night,
And gloomily reluctant breaks the dawn.
The cock, impatient, for the morning calls;
And now the diſmal orb of ſlumb'ring day
With melancholy viſage through the gloom
Scarce penetrates, and ſickly twilight ſheds.

Feeble the ſplendor of his moody ſmile,
And ſoon his race concludes. He ſeems at length,
Fatigued by journeying ſix thouſand years,
To aſk his promiſed ſabbath, pants for reſt,
And early ſeeks his inn. Not ſuch the ſpeed
And nightly progreſs of his ſiſter orb,
She, cheerful and alert, ſoon as his ray
Is quench'd in ocean, riſes from her bed,
And with affectionate protracted beam
Strives to compenſate for his abſent light.
Round the cerulean firmament of heaven
She walks, an ample circuit, ſecond day,
Inferior hardly to the ſhorter firſt,
Through the long night diſpenſing. He his head
Lifts from his maritime cloud-curtain'd couch,

Surveys, diſdaining competition ſtill,
Her amiable effort, droops again,
And longer ſleeps inert. And ſome there are
Who, dwelling far remote on Arctic plains
Buried in ſnow eternal, his pure orb
See never now, or ſee but half emerge,
Recumbent ere it riſe, or ſhare alone
The feeble twilight of his diſc depreſs'd,
Which once a day illuminates unſeen
The horizontal verge of endleſs night.
To them the moon, immeaſurably kind,
Sinks never, but with everlaſting march,
Waxing and waning 'mid the ſtellar hoſt,
The cynoſure encircles. Heaven there
Seems a vaſt dome, whoſe change-performing orb,

And brilliant hoſt of ever-living gems,
Hung on the boreal ſtar that ſhines alone
Faſt-fix'd and vertical, ſwim round and round,
And never, weary of their whirling dance,
Quit the celeſtial cupola ſublime
To ſeek refreſhment in the gelid wave.
Such vaſt benevolence, ſweet orb, is thine.
Nor, truſt me, can inferior love of man
Be to her brother orb imputed. Both
Are the ſweet progeny of one above
Whoſe name is Bounty, and inherit both,
Twin-born, the boundleſs goodneſs of their ſire.
Their buſineſs here is to enlighten man,
Elſe void of eyeſight, and his needful bread
Cheriſh with kind invigorating beam.

On this their gracious taſk intent toil both,
Inceſſant labourers, and never pauſe,
As fancy deems, o'erwearied with fatigue,
Or ſleep, or aſk relief. When he the zone,
That girds the waiſt of earth, with northward march
Croſſes refulgent, and his ſiſter meets,
He bids her with a ſmile this Arctic world
Quit, and illuminate the pole below,
Her day prolonging as he ſhortens his.
So when his blazing chariot flames on high
To rear the northern harveſt, ſhe depreſſed
Lightens the froſty hemiſphere beneath,
To us apparent little, long withdrawn.
She knows that ſummer's night needs not her beam,
Contracts her feeble day, and ſoon retires

Becauſe her ardent helpmate ſoon returns.
And when again with retrogreſſive car
He journeys ſouthward, and the fancied belt
Of earth repaſſes, with fraternal kiſs
He bids her haſten to the wint'ry north,
While he diſpenſes to Antarctic realms,
That will not mourn her abſence, ſweet return
Of bloſſom, foliage, fruit, and food. Such now
His taſk benevolent. To us alone
He ſeems ſubdued by ſloth. For while on high
Her everlaſting lamp his ſiſter hangs,
To light a frozen world he ſeems to ſcorn
And viſit with reluctance, he below
Reigns bountiful, and with indulgent beam
Bids plenty flouriſh to the fartheſt pole.

Such are thy bounteous children, bounteous ſire,
Such thy twain dutiful obedient orbs,
Which thus to all mankind, by night, by day,
Whatever ſeaſon rules whatever clime,
Diſtribute equal portions of thy love.

Not pleaſureleſs the morn, when diſmal fog
Rolls o'er the dewy plain, or thin miſt drives;
When the lone timber's ſaturated branch
Drips freely, and with large redundant drop
The ſpread umbrella pelts, which the chill'd tooth
Screens, and o'ercanopies the languid lock.
Shorn of his glory, through the dim profound
With melancholy aſpect looks the orb
Of ſtifled day, and while he ſtrives to pierce
And diſſipate the ſlow reluctant gloom,

Seems but a rayleſs globe, an autumn moon
That gilds opaque the purple zone of eve,
Nor yet diſtributes of her thrifty beam.
Lo! now he conquers; now, ſubdued awhile,
Awhile ſubduing, the diſparted miſt
Yields us a brighter beam, or darker clouds
His crimſon diſc obſcure. Through the thin veil
Of his foul mantle reads the bard, *well-pleaſed*,
A kindling glimpſe of the pure azure field
Of heav'n's unbounded champain, and the hour
Of winter's noon ſerene with inward joy
Greets ere it bleſs his ſight. To him who walks
Now in the ſhelter'd mead, loud roars above
Among the naked branches of the elm,
Still freſh'ning as the hurried cloud departs,

The ſtrong Atlantic gale. Not louder falls
The foamy laſher's cataract ſuperb
In fulleſt flood-time, when impatient Thames
Fights with the lock which chains him to his ſeat,
And ſtrives to burſt his manacles in vain.

Yet not devoid of *pleaſure* is the field,
Howe'er the gale may buffet, nature ſtill
Some grateful objects yielding to the ſight.
Though brown the common with its withered fern,
And ſad the valley with its leafleſs wood,
Yet crimſon haws, and hips of ruddy hue,
And cluſter'd privet-berries, dark as jet,
The cheerful hedgerow ſprinkle. Lo! the plant,
Joy of the traveller yclep'd, or beard
Of old man ſeldom razor'd, luſty ſtill,

Though neighbour'd by the prickly bramble, ſmiles,
The long lane whitening with its woolly tufts.
Beneath it mark a ſear'd and cindery ſpot
Which ſcattered ſtraws encompaſs. There encamped
The laſt night's wearied vagrant, mumbled there
His mildewed maintenance by whining earned;
There quaffed the cup his tattered female brewed,
And ſlept profound upon the muſty truſs.
Fool! to prefer ſuch execrable fare,
Such vile accommodation, to the bread
Of pious toil, and comfortable hut
Where Induſtry around the glimm'ring hearth
Her never-ailing progeny convenes,
And ſober Labour, her well-wearied ſpouſe,
His ev'ning meal enjoys, or ſits refreſhed

And hums his ruſtic ſonnet, as he jogs
The laughing little-one on either knee.
Fool! to be vagabond and rather beg,
While his loud huſſey, in her cobbled ſuit
Of ſulphur redolent and of the green
And ſobbing ember of the ſmoky hearth,
Screams through the village miſerable ſong,
Vendreſs of ballads and the bundled match.
Not diſtant far the river-ſwelling ſhower,
If after bluſt'ring day come tranquil night,
And, ere the morning dawn, clothe marſh and mead
In the hoar coverlet of ſnowy froſt.
Clear though the glowing orb of day aſcend,
Pale watery radiance ſhall it ſhed around,
And ſoon be muffled by the creeping cloud

That with it bears the tempeſt, wind and hail,
Or copious ſhow'r aſſant of pelting rain.
Oft though he ſmile, as often ſhall he frown;
And when at laſt he takes a ſweet farewel
And ſinks into the blue and billowy main,
The beauteous bow ſhall, by his beam impreſſed,
Glow on the boſom of the cloud that flies.
O beautiful diſplay, rejoicing ſight,
How elegant the *pleaſure* drawn from thee!
Soft be the breath of heav'n, and through the clear
Tranſparent atmoſphere diſtinctly ſhine
The beauteous landſcape, its remoteſt hill
Unveiling of the blue ætherial miſt
Which diſtance o'er the faded proſpect draws;
What ſurer ſymptom of approaching fall?

Of rains to be renew'd? But what if day
Should ſob and whimper, and the ſullen ſhow'r
Draw its denſe curtain o'er the dewy hill,
While glutted earth her quiv'ring puddle ſhews
Vexed by the pattering ſhow'r? While the ſoked thatch
Drips haſty from the barn, and while the ſhoot,
Guſhing precipitous with bounding ſpout,
Its clinking reſervoir the hollow pipe
Fills merrily, within from pen or page
Sweet ſatisfaction may the bard derive.
Meantime the hovering flood ſpreads wide his wings,
And, fixed in firm array, with leafleſs heads,
In his mid-waters ſtand the root-bound files
Of wretched willow. Soon as morn returns,
The ſportſman's tube, diſglutted o'er the lake,

Pours a long echo pealing as it flies.

Keen blows the wind, and frosty night ensues.

The hearth burns clear, and a blue lambent flame

Plays round its glowing embers. Ill endures

The limb protruded its shin-piercing power,

And the scorch'd eyelid intervention asks

Of handkerchief uplifted, doubled news,

Hand ill at ease, or tipsey-footed screen.

The fev'rous kettle with internal coil

And ebullition totters on the bars,

Forth sending furious from its brazen lungs

Intense evaporation, fog and dew

Instinct with fire, to hand that dares approach

Intolerable as the parching gust

Sirocco, from the burning desert blown.

With folded feet inverted ſlumbers puſs
The livelong evening on the quilted hearth,
Or warmer knee, careſſed and often ſtroked,
Till gratitude awakes and lulls the ear
With drowſy murmurs of internal praiſe.
Look but abroad, and lo! the cheerful moon,
Long ſince aſcended from her cloudy couch,
High over head preſides. Froſt-loving Queen,
At winter's midnight how intenſe the grace
Which thy pure globe diſplays! The ſullen ſun,
How fled he diſcontent, a little curve
His haſty march deſcribing, a few hours
Quenching his feeble beam! but thy clear orb
Delights to linger o'er a frozen world.
How ſweetly roſe it o'er yon woody hill,

How gaily ſmiled upon the tranquil flood,
Seen from the bridge that overſtrides the vale,
And now how glows it in the midſt of heaven!
Methinks, I feel thy beam. My heart at leaſt
Is warmed, is melted by thy ſovereign ray.
And oh! like thee, that ev'ry friend we own
Were moſt indulgent in an hour like this.
Beautiful art thou; and if thou art fair,
How fair is HE whoſe wonder-working hand
Thy beauty framed? If to thy lovely orb
I almoſt bow and hail thee as divine,
What adoration would my ſoul o'erflow,
Might I the cloud that curtains HIM around
Withdraw, and ſee him beauteous as he is?
Fountain of elegance, unſeen thyſelf,

What limit owns THY beauty, when thy works
Seem to poſſeſs, to faculties like mine,
Perfection infinite? The mereſt ſpeck
Of animated matter, to the eye
That ſtudiouſly ſurveys the wiſe deſign,
Is a full volume of abundant art.
If to the ſpot inviſible we ſtrain
Our aching ſight, and with microptic tube
Bring it at laſt within our feeble ken,
What beauty owns it not? what crowded grace?
No point to THEE ſo delicately fine
Can reaſon fancy, where thy curious hand
May not have couched innumerable charms,
Could we down ſtretch our ſlender faculty,
Our viſual ray ſo feculent and dull,

And read the wonders microſcopic eye
Has taught us never, and ſhall never learn.
Is it no *pleaſure*, when prevailing froſt
Has hardened earth's dank ſurface, and the foot
Treads upon rock where erſt it ſank abſorbed—
Is it no pleaſure, ere the riſing ſun
Has drawn away the raw unwholeſome fog
That dwells upon the vale, to venture forth
And mark the wonders of the midnight rime;
To pace it briſkly o'er the plain, beſet
With bents and ruſhes ſear, erewhile erect
And little noticed, nodding now; ſuperb
As plumes upon the hearſe, or roſy brow
Of beauty decked for conqueſt in the dance?
Where are the treaſuries of water now?

Delicate element, wherever lodg'd,
How ſhuns thy fearful fluid the keen touch
Of arrow-breathing froſt, o'er ev'ry plaſh,
And ev'ry furrow of the ploughing wheel,
And evry ſocket which the paſtern left
Erewhile impeded, a tranſparent plate,
Studded with beads or cryſtal ſpikes ſerene,
Relinquiſhing, and ſhrinking into earth!
The very flood, that but a fair day ſince
Spread wide his thin invaſion, is conſtrained
Within his barrier. His arreſted tide
In fragments hangs ſuſpended o'er the dyke
Hollow beneath, and burſting with loud craſh
Surpriſes oft both traveller and ſteed,
Startled alike at its immediate fall.

Touch'd by the genial orb, the ſcattered rime,
That whitened ev'ry meadow, ſteals away;
Save where the molehill intercepts the beam,
Or ſteepy brow, or intervening hedge,
Or furrow weſt-ward tending. On each blade
Of the flock-nibbled field it hangs ſerene
In brilliant dew-drops, twinkling bright as ſtars,
Another heav'n, which the clear orb of day
Not quenches but illumes, a dazzling ſhew
Of conſtellations kindled as we paſs;
Reflecting ſome his introverted beam
Pure as derived, his hue of orange ſome
Preſenting only, ſparks of amber deemed.
Again night paſſes, and ſeverer froſt
Binds faſt impeded nature. Soon as morn

Kindles, the village younker tries his foot
Upon the frozen margin of the pool,
Fearful to venture on the ſlippery floor,
Leſt, burſting with abrupt and hideous craſh,
It drown his inſtep, and his naily ſhoe
Drench with the chilling element below.
Bold with ſucceſs, he tries a daring ſtroke
Along its verge, and now magnanimous
Darts o'er the fragile center of the flood
His long reſounding ſlide. Safe borne to ſhore
He turns impatient, and with ruſhing heel
Shapes o'er the pond, his parallel return.
Then round and round he leads his gliding team
Of ſchool-mates well-aſſured, and panting ſport
Glows with her effort, nor beſtows a thought

Upon the lurking peril of her game.

Oft let me ponder on thy ſtrong control,

Thou wonder-working Froſt, that in a night

The miry way, impaſſable at eve,

Converts to iron, which nor foot, nor wheel,

Nor tool can penetrate— covers the lake,

E'en to the kickſey vulnerable erſt,

With adamantine war-defying ſhield

Which braves the preſſure of a hoſt unhurt—

Arreſts the rivulet— the river binds—

Lays its imperious mandate on the gulph

And fetters navigation to its ſhore—

In reſolute embrace the whaler locks

Amid ſea anchored, fearleſs of ſurpriſe—

And launches now a continent of ice

To wreck the war-ſhip in the midmoſt deep.

Wild flies the mid-day vapour denſe and foul,
And ſoon ſhall come the fall. O'er the blue deep
Of beauteous æther trails the lazy cloud,
A ſable fleece, repoſitory dark
Of murky ſnows unwinnowed, ſtooping low,
Lambent already of the topmoſt hill.
Few flakes of ev'ry ſize float through the air,
As undetermined or to riſe or fall:
Caught by the circling eddy of the breeze,
Lo! now they mingle all in rapid dance,
And with a ſweep deſcend. A feathery ſhower
Of flakes enormous follows, 'lighting ſoft
As cygnet's down, or egret from the head
Of thiſtle raviſhed. Oft againſt the ſhower

Homeward returns the ſteeple-loving daw,
But, blinded ſtill, with agitated wing
Down drops, ſtruggling in vain, and to the branch,
Which midway meets him in his worried flight,
Retires defeated. To his early couch,
The golden lap of the vaſt weſtern cloud
Which ſpreads beneath him its capacious bed,
Haſtens the ſun, or through the ſaffron ſkirt
Of the dark cloud that overtakes his orb
Snow-ſhedding, with diſhevelled beams aſlant
Diſordered ſmiles. In his pale watery ray
Glitters the diſtant vane and gilded clock.
Night follows, muffled in profoundeſt gloom.
The ſullen gale howls in the diſmal elm,
Or in the chimney groans, with ſudden guſt

Oft forcing downward a ſulphureous puff
Noiſome below. Againſt the window pelts
Scarce heard, at intervals, the frozen ſhower,
And, ev'ry crevice ent'ring, piles within
Drift unperceived of its thrice-bolted flake.

How changed the day-break! The bright yeſter ſun
Led forth a peerleſs morn, and ſmiling ſealed
The ſtill meridian of heav'n's ample dome,
Cloudleſs, and lined with an unſpotted veſt
Of pureſt blue; while laughing earth beneath
Shewed no reluctant verdure, well content,
However keen the ſeaſon, to expand
Her vernal mantle o'er the humid field.
Now breaks, in vapour wrapt, the piercing dawn.
Unuſual light upon the cieling thrown

Wakes from its ſlumber the ſuſpicious eye,
And bids it look abroad on hill, and dale,
Cottage, and ſteeple, in the niveous ſtole
Of Winter trimly dreſſed. The ſilent ſhower,
Precipitated ſtill, no breeze diſturbs,
While fine as duſt it falls. Deep on the face
Of the wide landſcape lies the ſpotleſs flood
Accumulating ſtill, a vaſt expanſe,
Save where the frowning wood without a leaf
Rears its dark branches on the diſtant hill,
Or hedge-row, ill-diſcerned, with dreary length
Strides o'er the vale encumbered, or lone church
Stands veſted weatherward in ſnowy pall,
Conſpicuous half, half not to be diſcerned.
The yeſter wain, that thunder'd as it paſt,

Nor made impreſſion on the rugged plain.
With frozen ſockets rough, now ſoftly moves,
And labours ſilent through the feathery drift,
As if its every wheel and every hoof
Were ſhod with noiſeleſs felt or ſtiller down.
How fair the deluge that enwraps the hill!
Its whiteneſs ſhames the murky cloud above,
Makes ocean turbid ſeem and doubly foul,
And to the ſullied aſpect of the cliff
Allows no neatneſs. What if the clear orb
Of night or day from the pure vault of heaven
Look unimpeded down! How glowing then
The thrice-bleached purity of earth beneath,
Wrapt like a ſpirit in a blaze of light!
And how excells her ſplendor, well oppoſed

By the deep azure of the heav'n above.

Short is the *pleaſure* of the tranſient gleam.

The penetrating breeze, whoſe frozen gale,

Midway the ſeldom-breathing Eaſt between

And North of arrowy lungs, blows from a cave

Of everlaſting ice redundant cloud

And the ſtrong current of perpetual ſnow,

Sweeps from the hoary brow of ſhuddering earth

Her powdered wreath, ſtrips her broad ſhoulders bare,

And mingles with its fine and rapid ſhower

The flakes that ſettled on her breaſt in vain.

With inſult riotous aloft in air

It lifts the deluge, from the ſummit ſwept,

And drifts it deep along the vale below.

How ſtings the guſt, diſtreſsful to the face

And ill-defended ear, while o'er the plain,
Screened by no hedge-row, lies the bitter path!
And how delights the perſecuted cheek
To meet the glowing ſhelter of high wood,
Or garden wall prolix, or endleſs pale!
Pure ſhines the flake we trample, cruſted o'er
With icy plate, where'er the feeble ray
Of the ſhort morning gleam diſſolved awhile
It dazzling treaſures. Yet ſuſtains it not
The tread of paſſenger alert, but, cruſh'd
And forcibly condens'd, complains aloud
Of the hard preſſure of his froward foot.
Inceſſant froſt prevails. In every nook,
Keyhole, and angle, howls the whiffling guſt,
And quaintly imitates man's whiſp'ring voice,

His ſigh, and groan profound. Snow falls apace.
On either margin of the rippling brook
Appears a border of encroaching ice
Which oer its ſurface creeps. Under its wings,
Chaſtely tranſparent, merrily alive,
Glides unarreſted ſtill the living ſtream.
Freſh at the bottom, mindleſs of the ſtorm,
Smiles the green creſs aquatic; till at length,
Spike after ſpike advancing, in midſtream
The furrowy ſurface cloſes. Ill-diſcerned
And all unheard travels the brook beneath;
Nor ſeldom, by the ceaſeleſs drift o'erwhelm'd,
Lives unperceived, and the deep-plunging foot
Wraps without notice in ſuffuſion chill.
Slow moves the torpid river: flakes of ice

Stoop from the bank to kiſs his ſhrinking ſtream,
Which, lazily advancing, yet appears
To reek with labour. On his ſurface float
Iſles deſolate and horrid, ſnow-beſprent,
Of his own frozen waters. Change is near.
Slow falls the weary flake, and yon dun cloud
Briſkly aſcending from the cottage hearth,
Pillar voluminous of lofty ſmoke,
Foretells that ſoon their idle lapſe ſhall ceaſe.
Lo! it ſubſides. The foul depending cloud
Draws ling'ring upward its apparent ſkirt,
And through its ſever'd fleece ſhews ill-refined
The welcome azure. O'er the city ſwells
The cloud prodigious of uplifted ſmoke,
Wrapping her diſtant ſteeples in eclipſe

Soon to be ſwept away. Yet ere the ſhut
Of evening comes, ſhall the departing beam
Of the low ſun delight us, and the moon,
Soon as he diſappears, in the fair eaſt
Riſe ample-orb'd upon a waſte of ſnow.

Meantime what *pleaſure* yields the rural walk?
Delights it not to paſs the threſher's cloſe,
What time with inſtant wing from their ſcant meal
Of winnowed draff the ſparrow ſwarm upſpring?
The mingled hurry of their ſounding plumes
How ſtartles it the ear, while they alert
Along the hedgerow ſhower, or ſit aloft
And from the ſummit of the leafleſs elm
Exceſſive chirpings pour; fond parliament,
Where all are ſpeakers and none ſits to hear!

In thick and horrent coat, no longer ſleek,
With heels unclipp'd, and ſhaggy mane promiſs,
In his lone corner ſtands the leering colt,
At leiſure reliſhing his ſcanty meal
Of thin up-ſhaken forage. To the cow,
That with a wiſhful look his feaſt ſurveys
At fearfull diſtance fixed, from his white eye
Reverſed, he flaſhes indignation ſtrong
And peremptory menace, crouching cloſe,
And trampling looſe on his vindictive heel,
With ſullen down-laid ear. Not far remote,
Round the ſweet remnant of the hoarded rick
Sliced to a core, or ſolitary wain
In the ſtill bottom of the ſheltered vale
For their ſubſiſtence placed, convenes the flock

Of their approaching meal-time duly aware.
Eagerly throng they, as of yore they trooped
In the dry ſummer's eve, with hurried bell
And duſt-provoking tread, to village pool
Or valley trough from the near well ſupplied.
Subdued by hunger, the poor feathery tribes
Small dread of man retain, though wounded oft,
Oft ſlain, or ſcared by his reſounding tube.
The fieldfare grey, and he of ruddier wing,
Hop o'er the field unheeding, eaſy prey
To him whoſe heart has adamant enough
To level thunder at their humbled race.
The ſable bird melodious from the bough
No longer ſprings, alert and clamorous,
Short flight and ſudden with tranſparent wing

Along the dyke performing, fit by fit.

Shudd'ring he ſits, in horrent coat outſwoln.

Deſpair has made him ſilent, and he falls

From his loved hawthorn, of its berry ſpoiled,

A waſted ſkeleton, ſhot through and through

By the near-aiming ſportſman. Lovely bird,

So end thy ſorrows, and ſo ends thy ſong.

Never again in the ſtill ſummer's eve,

Or early dawn of purple-veſted morn,

Shalt thou be heard, or ſolitary ſong

Whiſtle contented from the watery bough,

What time the ſun flings o'er the dewy earth

An unexpected beam, fringing with flame

The cloud immenſe, whoſe ſhower-ſhedding folds

Have all day dwelt upon a deluged world.

No, thy ſweet pipe is mute, it ſings no more.

High on the topmoſt branches of the elm
In ſable converſation ſits the flock
Of ſocial ſtarlings, the withdrawing beam
Enjoying, ſupperleſs, of haſty day.

Half-ſtarved and petrified, the pigeon mopes
With bloated plumage on the dove-houſe tile,
And ſeems forgetful of his amorous bow
And note of love profound. No more he ſtarts
With loud applauding wing from his huſh'd cove,
Nor ſweeps with ſwift career the ſnowy down.

But moſt of all ſubdued, or fearful leaſt
Of man's ſociety, with ruddy breaſt
Againſt the window beats, ſagacious bird,
The robin. At the door half open left

Or by the gale unlatch'd, or narrow paſs
Of air-admitting caſement, or (to him
Sufficient port) the ſplintered aperture
Of attic pane demoliſhed, with a flirt
Enters the fledged intruder. He has left
His haunt divine the woodhouſe and the barn,
A feathery mendicant made bold by want,
And every little action aſks aloud,
Alms the moſt indigent might well afford,
A drop of water and a crumb of bread.
Timid and ſleek upon the floor he hops,
His ev'ry feather clutch'd, all ear, all eye,
And, ſpringing ſwift at the firſt ſound he hears,
Thumps for diſmiſſion on the healthy pane.
Sweet beggar, no. Impenetrable glaſs

Has cloſed around thee its tranſparent cage,
Eſcape denying. Satisfy thy need,
And, having fed, be free. Beneath my chair
Sit budge, a feathery bunch; upon its ſtaves
Poliſh thy clattering beak; with head reverſed
Dreſs ev'ry plume that decks thy plain ſurtout,
And either pinion of thy ſlender wing;
With bridled bill thy ruddy boſom ſmooth,
And, all performed, delight me, if thou wilt,
With a faint ſample of contented ſong,
Conciſe and ſweet. Then flit around the room,
Cheerful though ſilent, ſeizing with an air
Each crumb diminutive which the laſt meal
Drop'd unperceived, and the religious broom
Unconſcious left upon the woven floor,

Or which the hand of charity lets fall
Not grudging. Banquet here, and ſleep to night,
And, when thy morning meal is finiſhed, fly;
Nothing unwelcome if thou dare return,
And daily ſeek the hoſpitable feaſt
Strewed to invite thee on the caſement ledge.
Soon as eve cloſes, the loud-hooting owl,
That loves the turbulent and froſty night,
Perches aloft upon the rocking elm
And hallooes to the moon. She mounting ſlow,
Steers her wild voyage through a troubled ſea
Of diſſipated ſcud, apparent oft,
Oft intercepted by the billowy ſkirt
Of the fleet vapour, oft in part o'ercome,
Yet ſtill victorious, be the ſtorm how rude,

And nothing later at the port ſhe ſeeks,
Retarded by the tide of adverſe cloud.
Come, cheerful ſeaſon, when the village clerk
With ſlips of evergreen his long aiſle decks,
When cottage maids alert their windows trim
With the red berry and the varniſhed leaf
Of holly never ſear, and hang on high
The tufted miſletoe. It wins me much;
And childiſh as the ſage may deem the toil,
My hand ſhall help to decorate the pane.
The peaſant female now, with finger nice
And curious ſciſſar, faſhions for her child
The paper ornament, and crowns his brow
And decorates his ſkirt with fair device.
Proud of his honours, at the paſtor's door

He ſings and ſhudders, chanting carol rude
Of comfort and of joy. His laboured ſong
Humanity within hears with a ſmile,
Admires the caſual tremor of its tones,
And the looſe halfpenny with glad conſent
Upon the frozen quaverer beſtows.

Soon from the moiſt Antarctic breathes the gale,
And its ill-molten ſhower of arrowy fleet,
Storm fracture threat'ning of the pelted pane,
Scatters aſlant and ſloping to the breeze.
Awhile congealing on the trunk expoſed
Of the lone tree, or timber ſtretch'd at length,
Or ſtile unſhelter'd, or ſtorm-facing gate,
Or ſlippery ſurface of uncovered rock,
An icy coat it ſpreads around ſerene,

With gelid welcome the protruded hand
Surpriſing unobſerved, beguiling too
Oftimes the foot unwary, and with fall
Diſgraceful vexing the confounded man,
All overwhelm'd and flound'ring in the drift.
Partial and brief the ſhower; for now a miſt
Draws o'er the diſtant hill its duſky veil,
Now hovers in the valley, now involves
The total landſcape, leaving to the eye
Small hemiſphere and dark, a little world
Few yards encompaſſing, a cloudy coop
That with the mover moves and coops him ſtill.
Touch'd by the trailing fog the mountain ſnows
Diſſolve, and, haſt'ning to the vale below,
Unite their waters, till combined in one

They fret the midway hill and gully deep
His flinty ſide. Inſufferably foul
The thickened torrent hurries down the vale,
And, every baſin filled that ſtayed its march,
Steers for the deep with ſtill-increaſing tide,
Till from the precipice abrupt it pours,
A foamy cataract that roars aloud,
And tinctures far beneath the decent veſt
Of ocean fretful at its wild embrace.
The ſnowy pall from hill and dale flow thaw
At length removes, ſave where the tardy drift,
In diſſolution ling'ring, laſt expires.
Ten thouſand currents, tinctured by the ſoil
From whence they iſſue, hurry to the main.
E'en Ouſe her ſilver purity has loſt

And feminine deportment. Full of ſhame,
And wroth at her adulterated ſtream,
She flounces ſeaward, and complains aloud
To parent Ocean of the wrong ſhe feels.
Turbid and brown into the greedy deep,
Sated with feculence, the chider falls.

Scarce diſappears the deluge, when the mole,
Cloſe pris'ner long in ſubterraneous cell
Froſt-bound, again the miner plays, and heaves
With treble induſtry the mellow mound
Along the ſwarded vale. The ſhepherd's eye
With unforgiving enmity ſurveys
The long concatenated ſweep of hills,
Whoſe ſoft and crumbling ſoil abridges more
The ſcanty pittance of his hungry fold.

Full in the pathway of his buried foe
The hollow engine of ſurpriſe he plants,
Portcullis treacherous, deceitful nooſe,
Which oft with ſudden inſult from his cave
Th' unwary toiler plucks, and hangs aloft
On diſmal gibbet, ſwinging to the wind.
Behold! where now he underſaps the ſward
And lifts the recent ſoil. The paſſing cur
His perſevering induſtry detects,
And ſtands with prick'd-up ear and lifted paw
His labours watching. In the crumbled hill
He plunges ſudden his impatient feet,
And far behind him ſhowers the looſe earth
Pluck'd haſtily away. With noſe deep-ſunk
He ſniffs inquiſitive, but ſeizes not

The wily engineer, in time aware.

Such *pleaſure*, ſuch amuſement Winter yields,
To him who loves with nature to converſe,
And paint her image in immortal ſong.
E'en from the naked February wood,
Aſſemblage multitudinous of boughs,
He plucks *contentment*. There the giant oak
Uprears contorted its enormous arm,
Deſpoiled of foliage, yet not unadorned,
In the thin frippery of lichen dreſs'd
E'en to its utmoſt finger. There the birch
With fine-ſpun branch and ſilvery rind appears.
And there, retentive of its withered leaf,
The beech ſmooth-bodied, decorated oft
With names uncouth carved on its ſinewy trunk.

At its foot thrives the winter-loving moſs,
Luxuriant moſt when the bare branch above
Retains no verdure. During ſummer's heat,
However ſhelter'd, it grew ſear and died,
Or ſeem'd to die, but, the dank hour arrived,
Lo! how it wraps about the wreathen root
Its ſhaggy mantle, flouriſhing profuſe.
What loom e'er furniſh'd for imperial floor
Tapis more rich, or grateful to the foot?
What hand e'er ſpread upon the ſmooth ſettee
Cuſhion more gentle, pluſhy pile more ſoft?
Nor only on the beech-root recent ſmiles,
Or wall of ancient edifice or field,
Or thatch decayed that clothes the peaſant's cot,
But oft amid the lean and meager turf

Of the low lawn, or hill, looks ſprightly forth
The proſp'rous moſs; there to the fond eye ſpreads
Its welcome carpet of refreſhing green,
And freely bloſſoms in the piercing guſt.
Bleak as it is, through day's ſevereſt gloom
Appears ſweet promiſe of the milder year.
So teſtify the ſpurs ready to burſt
And bloſſom gaily on the pear-tree bough;
And proves eſpecially the forked branch
Of lilac, bearing at its either point
Twin buds protuberant: proves too, beneath,
Not ventureſome in vain, the pendulous flower,
That, drooping, dares unveil its modeſt charms
E'en to the kiſs of bloſſom-killing froſt.
Pleaſed with her beauty, the tyrannic ſtorm

Not mars her elegance with ſurly touch,
But wraps his ſnows around her beauteous head,
And names her his for ever. Lead the year,
Thou welcome harbinger of ſofter days,
Drop, which, more lovely than the winnowed flake
Which ſtrives to hide thy charms, in the cold ear
Of Winter beauteous hang'ſt, and ſham'ſt the fall
Moſt pure that veils thee, and extends around
Its candid drift in competition vain.
White in the ſhrubbery, at every turn,
Thy verdant tuft its bevy delicate
Of fair tripetalous depending flowers
Diſplays, and dances in the froward breeze.
Protected ſnug beneath the ſouthern fence,
Lily of Lent, with diadem ſuperb,

The monarch daffodil, uprears his head,
Nor dreads the guillotine of the keen gale.
Green at his ſide, with arrow-headed leaf,
Spring his attendant court, his train of peers
And peereſſes ſuperb, *Ladies and Lords*;
So name the rural folk the ſpeckled cowls
That ſheath the tender arum, yet alive
And yet abundant, though the ſable bird
Of ſweeteſt melody the winter long
Dwelt here, and ſtill with perſevering beak
Harrow'd the ſoil, ſoon as the mid-day ſun
The chains of froſt unbound; keen democrat,
Making nobility his daily bread.

Sweet is the foretaſte of returning Spring,
When, after diſmal weeks of gloom and fog,

Reluctant February lifts at last
The cloudy turban from his ſullen brow,
And cheers us with a ſhort unwilling ſmile.
How *pleaſant* then th' appearance here and there
Of the blue zenith through the muffled heaven!
How welcome the ſun's clear but tranſient beam!
Its comfortable warmth the ſhoulder owns,
And the fond eye rejoices to ſurvey
The ſhadow human, once again impreſſed
Upon the bladeleſs turf. But ſoon departs
Th' invigorating gleam, and o'er the down,
Nothing retarded by intreaty, flits.
It viſits now the lark and wakes his ſong,
Now cheers the ſhepherd and his prægnant flock,
Now climbs the mountain, and is ſeen no more.

If haply the denſe curtain all withdraw
And leave unclouded the pure vault of heaven,
How *pleaſant* to behold the glowing ſun
A more extended curve from riſe to fall
Deſcribing daily, from his billowy couch
Aſcending earlier, later to his reſt
And better-pleaſed retiring with a ſmile!
How ſweet a train of *pleaſurable* days
Are beckon'd hither, and how ſoon ſhall dance
Each after other over down and dale!
Soon ſhall the vanquiſh'd night her empire yield,
And ſhare the ſcepter with victorious day.
Darkneſs ſhall reign inferior; heav'nly light
Upon her either boundary ſhall ſteal,
Shall gird her round with beams, and dart a ray

Through the ſad mantle of her dunneſt hour.

How cheerfully my heart the ſweet return

Of bud and bloom preſages, ſees ere ſeen

The daiſy-ſprinkled mead, and flowery dell,

And coppice-ſhelter'd primroſe yet unblown!

THE FAVORITE VILLAGE.

BOOK IV.

ARGUMENT of the FOURTH BOOK.

The pleaſures of the favorite village during Spring— the warm ſun, and firſt leaf and bloſſom of the year— the fine night and ſtormy day of March— the equinoctial ſunriſe— general appearance of nature— the flock— the ewe and lamb— the reptile baſking in the ſun— the firſt appearance of the fleſh-fly— the pleaſure of travelling at this ſeaſon— various wild bloſſoms— the pea and bean— the plough-team— the group of weeders— the clear mid-day ſun— the ſong of birds, eſpecially the lark— the warmer day of Spring, and its effect upon the ploughman and his team— the appearance of the ſwallow— of the butterfly— of the child purſuing it— of the caterpillar— general view of nature— the firſt of May— the furze down— the garden— the hedgerow— birds building neſts— the evening walk— agreeable vernal ſounds of the favorite village— the walk at noon— The ſight of cattle grazing— of boys playing at cricket— of other rural ſports— of the mower— of the bean field— the clear evening not expected, and its agreeable imagery— the bee, an emblem of the bard— Concluſion.

THE

FAVORITE VILLAGE.

BOOK IV.

SAY, when the northern gale of March blows keen,
Inducing ear-twitch, ague, pain acute
Of tooth decaying, pulmonary cough,
Or ach rheumatic of the ſhudd'ring limb,
Under the ſouthern wall, yet unadorned,
Or hedge-row ſhelter of the roſy dyke
Where blooms the pale-eyed meſſenger of prime,
In the warm ſunbeam of unclouded noon
Is it not heaven to baſk? Is it not heaven
To walk beneath the high meridian wall,
Where the ſpruce apricot, a daring beau,
His leafleſs branches with advent'rous bloom

Sparingly powders, or their bluſhing gems
Unfold, more cautious, nectarine and peach?
Lo! the fluſh'd almond tree, divinely fair!
Why bluſh her ruddy bloſſoms, but for ſhame
Of the bare bloomleſs branch that round her lives,
And ſhews no flower, and no leaf unfolds?
So redden'd erſt the ſacerdotal rod,
And drop'd its bloom, and deck'd its branch with fruit,
While not a bud the naked ſtems adorned
Of its unhallowed rivals. Wond'rous God,
Tender and good to all which thou haſt made,
Succour the bloſſom and the forward bud—
The ſcarce and fearful daiſy, ill diſcloſed
And couching low, veiling its tender eye
With fingers dip'd in crimſon— the freſh leaf

That decks the gooſeberry's vindictive branch,
And elder's thornleſs bough— the ruddy ear
Of woodbine eager to be gay, his flower
Determin'd ſoon about the ling'ring oak
To wind in ſhame of the ſlow Spring's delay.
Succour the lilac, whoſe prolific bud
Betrays its purple ſymptom, promiſe ſweet
Of many a ſpike to be unfolded ſoon
And nod majeſtic on the brow of May.
Thou fickle ſeaſon, let thy morning ſmile
To noon continue, and from noon to night.
Let not the cloud that lifts its pillowy head
Above the blue horizon, and ere long
Shall ſhew its ſable waiſt and trailing ſkirt,
Curtain thy orb, and the protruded gem

Bruiſe with its dancing hailſtone. If the ſhower
Fall frequent, fall it kind and not ſevere,
And fall to meliorate the thirſty ſoil
Of field and garden, that thy genial beam
May hatch the blade of ev'ry ſeed unſeen.
So ſhall the farmer bleſs thee— ſo, his dame,
Who ſpreads to bleach upon the village green
Her home-ſpun ſheeting, recent from the loom—
So, the blithe gard'ner, often with his ſpade
Seen early deep-upturning the rich ſoil,
Harrowing often and diſpoſing ſmooth
Its mellow ſurface with the fine-toothed rake,
Often his ſcythe heard whetting ere the dawn
And ſhaving ſmooth the ſward, or ſeen at noon
Trampling his border with aſſiduous heel.

If ſhow'r, attended by the gale, deſcend,
Grateful the contraſt of imperious day
Chaſing indignant the diſhevelled cloud,
And ſtill tranſparent night, with peerleſs gems
Studding the tranquil canopy of heaven.
From yon uplifted ſummit, when the ſun
Of March, high-mounted, wears a moody ſmile,
Indulgent only to theſe winnowed brows,
What time the partial ſtorm in ſullen pomp
Sails o'er the proſtrate weald, let me look down
And ſee the murky cloud prone deluge ſhed,
And ev'ry town and ſteeple, dim-diſcern'd,
Curtain in gloom terrific. At ſuch time,
What if the lightning bolt, long laid aſide,
Amid the grim proceſſion chance to gleam,

And thunder, ſurly to be rouſed ſo ſoon,
Mutter reluctant from his ſtormy couch?
It ſhall but ſolemn render the ſlow march
Of the dark tempeſt, through its gloomy brows
Frowning meridian night, and wake no dread,
No wiſh of flight, nor ſenſe of peril here.
No! I ſhall eye it ſafely as it ſteals
In gloomy ſtate away, and leaves behind
The freſhen'd landſcape leiſurely diſmiſſed.
Lo! in the glowing eaſt the cloud ſublime
Lifting its arduous and illumin'd head
High above higheſt earth, a pile ſuperb
Of vapour, wrapping in its ſmoky ſkirts
Heav'n's everduring threſhold, and the beam
Of day's clear orb reſplendent from its folds

Reflecting glorious. With the falling ſun
Slow ſinks the pomp away, and while his orb
In flaky redneſs ſets, and fills the weſt
With fiery fragments of diſparted cloud,
The laſt-apparent ſummit of the ſtorm
The ruddy hue imbibes and ſanguine glows;
Till, day withdrawn and the vex'd æther huſh'd,
The tempeſt all ſubſides and dies away,
And the pure heav'n diſplays an ardent moon
Swimming ſelf-balanc'd through the blue profound.

On this commanding ſummit let me ſtand
To ſee the vernal equinoctial orb
Freſh from his chambers in the deep aſcend.
Ariſe, bright leader of the beauteous year,
Sweep thy long fingers o'er the ſhadowy vale

And ſmite the hill-tops. Nature at thy ſoft
Reviving touch with concord exquiſite
Shall to her center vibrate. Total earth
Shall ring ſweet uniſon from hill and dale.
My boſom, like the fabled lyre of old
Memnonian, or the harp that wooes the breeze,
Shall ſing with extacy, and pour around
Spontaneous ſweet effuſion, mellow verſe,
Ode beſt expreſſive of the grateful ſoul.
Here let me ſtand, and o'er the level weald
That, like a ſpacious chart, outſtretch'd beneath
Lies chequer'd, caſt an aching eye, to mark
Each well-known object in the miſty ſkirt
Of the long-drawn perſpective. Seen from hence
The budding wood a ruſſet hue aſſumes,

And, as the gem protrudes, the ſocial group
Of elms and oaks that herd upon the lawn
(Shelter affording to the yeaning flock)
Seem pencil'd ſofter on the vale below.
The paintreſs Nature with reviving green
Colours her tender landſcape, down and mead,
A deeper tinge upon the long-ſown field
Spreading with equal hand, intending ſoon
Like grace and beauty for the tardier ſpot.

Now yields the flock to the bard's curious eye
Peculiar *pleaſures*. Often let me mark
The ſullen ewe's authoritative ſtamp
Where'er the ſheep-dog paſſes. Let me ſmile
At her deluded ſenſe, what time her lamb,
By the bleak ſeaſon ſlain, his welted coat

Yields to the flayer, and the raviſh'd twin
Of ſome fond mother in the coarſe diſguiſe
Appears looſe-coated, and uſurps his dug.
Dull fool, how ill perceives thy ſtupid eye
The palpable impoſture! Let me hear
The morning uproar of the fleecy folk,
What time, vociferous, their tardy march
With baying curs impatient their rude lord
To the green paſture urges. Loud enquires
The bleating mother for her ſunder'd lamb,
As loud complaining for his mother loſt.
With quick infallible perception, ſhe,
Amid the mingled outcry, hears diſtinct
His ſlender ſhrill entreaty. He remote,
With nicety that ſhames our groſſer ſenſe,

Her voice acknowledges, and through the crowd
Winds his inſulted way. She, provident,
Her milky treaſures for his lip reſerves,
Butting intruders with a frown away.
At length he finds her, and with bended knees,
Emblem of innocence and filial grace,
His plenteous meal receives, and bleats no more.

Now as I walk and ſlumber by the dyke,
Whene'er the mid-day ſun with pow'rful beam
Plays full upon the bank, 'mid the freſh tops
Of nettle faſt reviving, or green ſhoots
Of parſley welcome at the warren ſide,
Or ſear graſs unconſum'd, or prickly goſs,
Wriggles the viper and the baſking eft,
Or ſpotted ſnake innocuous, ſnapping ſhort

The thread of meditation, as they glide,
With whiſper not unwelcome. At the door
Enters the fleſh-fly, and with cheerful hum
Travels the houſe interior. On the pane
Thumps he and buzzes, the reſounding hall
Travels again, and with a bounce departs;
Grateful remembrance leaving on the mind
Of ſtill enjoyment in the muſing hour
Of ſummer's drowſy noon, and pleaſing thought
Oft interrupted by his briſk career.

If now I journey, often at my ſide
Let me the blue-bell'd hyacinth behold,
The ſilver anemóne of the wood,
And golden primroſe, intermingled well.
Let ev'ry bank with roſy tufts be fringed;

Be ev'ry corn-field carpeted anew
In recent herbage, ev'ry hillock crowned
And ev'ry valley gracefully beſprent
With drooping cowſlip, ev'ry marſhy dell
With ſumptuous caltha lined, and ev'ry down
Sowed with innumerable daiſy, white
Or tinged with crimſon at each finger's tip.
Let delicate archangel, white as ſnow,
In ev'ry nook appear, tempting the hand
Of city botaniſt, or village boy
Who plucks the leaf and bloſſom from its ſtem,
Fearleſs of ſmart, and the quadrangled tube
Into a pipe monotonous converts;
A wailing pipe, whoſe miſerable note
Reſembles moſt the viol's woeful ſcream

By the hard hand of inexperience ſcraped,
Or hautboy's harſher ſquall that racks the ſenſe
And tortures patience till ſhe ſcarce endures.
Not ſuch that awfuller Archangel trump
Which ſang at Sinai's mount, and ſhook the hoſt
Of proſtrate Iſrael with exceſſive awe:
Nor ſuch that future tube, which Death dethroned
Shall hear ill-pleaſed, and haraſs man no more,
Priſ'ner for ever in the ſealed abyſs.
Neat lies the ſurface of the weedleſs field
Where ſprings the bean-top martially diſpoſed
File within file, a luſty brotherhood,
Or ſhoots more tender in continuous rank
The pea-plant ill-ſupported, ſoon to fall
And with weak elbow lean upon the ground,

Save where the gard'ner with indulgent hand
Plants in her neighbourhood the leafleſs ſtake;
There with glad tendril to the branchy ſtaff
She clings, and with ambitious finger climbs
To wave her limber bloſſoms high in air.

Now moves again, but with a ſluggard's pace,
Not well awake, the plough. The harneſs'd team
Moves ſlowly forward, and not ſeldom ſtays,
Impeded ſore by congregated clods.
The rooky tribe attend, and, perched at hand,
Watch the moiſt furrow with ſuperior eye,
And briſk alight, upon the worm to prey
Or ſweeter grub unhouſed. Frequently there
Loiters, a grey-coat penſioner, the mew,
(His treaſury the main left far behind)

And ſhares the ſpoil terrene, with outſtretch'd wing
The ploughman's clodded heel purſuing cloſe,
And ſettling timorous. At length arrives
The hour of reſt long look'd for, and the team
Of wearied ſteers, from the bright ſhare releaſed,
Leave in the midſt of the freſh field upturned
The plough recumbent, and with hurried pace
March cheerful homeward. Expedition clanks
The heavy chain which knits them pair to pair,
And oft the forward ox, impatient, drags
The lingerer behind, his brawny neck
Straining with preſſure of the cumbrous yoke.

Forth goes the weeding dame, her daily taſk
To travel the green wheat-field, ancle-deep
In the freſh blade of harveſt yet remote.

Now with exerted implement ſhe checks
The growth of noiſome weeds, to toil averſe,
An animal gregarious, fond of talk.
Lo! where the goſſiping banditti ſtand
Amid field idle all, and all alike
With ſhrill voice prating, fluent as the pye.
Far off let me the noiſy group behold,
Nothing moleſted by their loud harangue,
And think it well to ſee the fertile field
By their red tunics peopled, and the frock
Of the white huſbandman that ploughs hard by,
Or guides the harrow team, or flings the grain
At ev'ry footſtep with exerted arm
Over the yawning furrow. Never more
Pleaſes the rural landſcape, than when man,

Drawn by the vernal ſunbeam from his cell,
The needful culture of the field renews.
Still of the frozen drift it ſomewhere ſwept
Savours the breeze of morn, and makes the cheek
Of beauty kindle with its keen ſalute.
But *grateful* is the mild and genial noon
Which, burſting unexpected from the cloud,
Diſpels the ſullen vapour that obſcured
And quench'd the matin beam, and the ſharp gale,
Which taſted of the ling'ring ſnows it paſſed
In ſome cold arctic realm remote, bids huſh.
How *delicate* the foretaſte yielded then
Of Summer yet with-held! and how delights
The raviſh'd ear to liſten to the ſound
Of warblers numberleſs! Appears it not

As if harmonious exhalation ſprung,
Soon as the cheering ſunbeam ſmote the field,
From earth's tranſported boſom, and diffuſed
Its ſweet vibrations through the trembling air?
No longer now aſſembles as of late,
Gregarious only in the winter hour,
Bird of the ſky baptized, the ſpeckled lark.
Oft o'er the plain inert or fallow then
In flight circuitous the nimble flock
Swam eddying, or with ſudden wheel revers'd
Shewed their tranſparent pinions to the ſun.
Now, earneſt as of yore with dewy plumes
To touch the roof of heav'n, in the firſt beam
Of the clear orb apparent, with a ſpring
Mounts the ſweet warbler, and with upward flight,

And throat that ſtruggles to make ſweeter ſtill
Exquiſite anthem, to the clouds aſcends.
The eye that ſees him with ſtrained viſion ſoars
To mark him quiv'ring in the ſkies above;
Nor ſeldom, his aſcenſion not obſerved,
Looks with vain ſcrutiny the dappled air,
Nor finds, inviſible, the vocal ſpirit
Which fills with raviſhment the deep of heaven,
And chants aërial melody unſeen.

Be ſtill thou chilly breeze, and let the beams
Of noon refulgent o'er the mellow field
Shed ſummer premature. Let the ſlow team
Of ſteers reluctant preſſing on the yoke,
With down-ſunk forehead and depending tongue,
With winding ſhoulders and ſlow-pacing foot,

Pant as it ploughs along the mountain ſide
The furrow, turning and returning ſtill.
Let him that ſteers the glitt'ring ſhare be warm,
And often pauſe at the tranſparent pool,
His doff'd brim dipping, and the gelid lymph,
Which trickles round it to his thirſty lip,
Imbibing eagerly. Let him that ſtalks,
And from the ſeedlip ſcatters wide around
The fruitful grain, peeled of his frock appear,
White o'er the furrows marching. White as he
Follow the pilot of the harrow-team,
Crumbling the ſurface and concealing well
Under its level'd wave the buried ſeed,
Alike diveſted, o'er the finiſhed field,
With ſleeve expoſed and long reſounding whip,

Let the rude boy, of his employment proud,
Guide the revolving axis. Gentle Heaven,
Yield meet indulgence to the yeaning flock
Which ſpreads the green encloſure, and the lamb
Cheriſh propitious, whether he repoſe,
Or feebly totter upon feet untried,
Or gambol ſprightly round the grazing ewes,
Soon loſt, and ſoon enquiring for his dam
Who bleats and mumbles at his ſlender call,
Yield to the trembling calf, inactive yet,
And the faint mother lowing at his ſide
Internal fond concern, their due ſupport.

How welcome to the ſight, when firſt diſcerned,
The vernal ſwallow, ſkimming with ſwift wing
The windy mead, or floating high in air

If noon be calm, or twitt'ring lonely ſong
Perch'd on the brink of chimney-throat profound!
How ſweetly falls it on th' attentive ear,
Reviving memory of ſummers paſt,
And many a ſweet and pleaſurable thought
Of ſultry days enjoyed and muſed away
Beneath the garden ſhade, while thus ſhe ſang
And warbled freely from her houſehold neſt!
Behold again with ſaffron wing ſuperb
The giddy butterfly. Releaſed at length
From his warm winter cell, he mounts on high,
No longer reptile but endued with plumes,
And through the blue air wanders; pert alights,
And ſeems to ſleep, but from the treach'rous hand
Snatches his beauties ſuddenly away,

And zig-zag dances o'er the flow'ry dell.
Acroſs the lawn he flies. His ſumptuous wing
Provokes attention in the playful child,
Who gallops briſk his not unruly cane
Over the daiſies at his parent's door,
Diverting and diverted. With fix'd eye
The ſettled bird he marks, with eager hand
Graſps at the prize, but covets it in vain,
Gives chace impetuous, but unable ſoon
To reach the golden flutterer, aloft
Flying ſtill free, with final fond attempt
Toſſes his cap in air and ſtrives no more.
So hunts the faſt philoſopher his fly,
The gilded fugitive o'er hedge and dyke
Inſane purſuing with a child's career.

Twere well if he too failed, and ſpread his net
And toſs'd his cap in vain, and ſeldom doomed
The beauteous captive to a ling'ring death.
But oft with baſe delight his murd'rous hand
Impales the ſufferer, and heats the dart
Which pierced its mail with ineffectual wound,
By little and by little quenching life,
Leſt the quick hand of mercy diſcompoſe
And mar the beauty of its burniſh'd coat.
Lively abhorrence ſtigmatize the deed.
It is enough for poets to detain
The lovely ſtranger, till the curious eye
Has well ſurveyed its graces, and adored
The power that clothed it in attire ſo gay.
Such inquiſition made, to the free wing

Give we the pris'ner, liberty reſtore,
Diſmiſs and thank him, and enjoy the thought
That ſome remote ſimilitude is our's
Of HIM who all things made, and all preſerves,
Sparing the meaneſt, and oppreſſing none.

Hatch'd by the ſunbeam from contiguous cells
Around the ſlender apple-twig combined
In circuit orderly, egg glued to egg,
Iſſue the caterpillar ſwarm minute.
There left, oviparous, her half-born brood,
Ere ſummer cloſed, the parent; left, and died.
There have they ſtill endured, and ſtill ſurvived
Sharp winter's tyranny; the bitter froſt,
That ſlew the myrtle and the laſting leaf
Of the ſcreen'd laurel changed, no death to them.

Now buſily convened, upon the bud
That crowns their genial branch they feaſt ſublime,
And ſpread their muſlin canopy around,
Pavilioned richer than the proudeſt king.
The ſpinſter caterpillar ties aloft,
Fine as the goſſamer, his ſlender cord
To his loved cradle the recov'ring elm,
And, playfully ſuſpended, rocks and whirls,
And, ere his wings are granted, lives in air.
So dangles o'er the brook, depending low,
The ſpider artiſt, till propitious breeze
Buoy him athwart the ſtream. From ſhore to ſhore
He faſtens then his horizontal thread,
Sufficient bridge, and, traverſing alert,
His fine-ſpun radii flings from ſide to ſide,

Shapes his concentric circles without art,
And, all accompliſh'd, couches in the midſt,
Himſelf the center of his flimſy toils.
So ſpins the Britiſh mariner his ſhrouds,
Nor ſpins them with leſs art, what time he fits
To the vaſt thunder-bark her woven wings.

Now let the painter poet walk abroad.
At ev'ry turn ſhall his attentive eye
Some lovely feature of reviving prime
Obſerve delighted. The green ſpringing blade
Of wheat, impatient of the long control
Of ling'ring froſt, ſpite of the prancing lamb
And mumbling ewe that check its proſp'rous growth,
Waves upon ev'ry hill. From ev'ry vale,
With verdure ſcarce inferior, ſmiles remote

The herb reſerved, and not to be impaired
By the voracious grazer's hungry tooth,
Ere it has yielded to the herdſman's ſcythe
The precious burden of the fragrant rick.
The orchard floor, with ſumptuous carpet ſpread,
Shames the ſlow branch that only buds above.
The hedge-row feels the ſcandal of delay,
And, here and there, along the ſunny dyke,
The pendent catkin hangs and flowery gull.
Provoked at their reproach, the darker thorn
Awakes, and ſprinkles his vindictive branch,
Not to be touch'd in vain, with bloom of ſnow.
Their tender leaf the woodbine and the quick
Put ſoftly forth. The ceraſus ſublime
Decks with few bloſſoms cautiouſly diſplayed

The cottage garden-plot, while bold beneath
The gooſeberry unfolds an ample leaf,
And hides in foliage her ten thouſand ſwords,
Sweet holiday of nature, eldeſt born
Of the fair train of laughter-loving May,
Come with thy garland tripping debonair,
Dance to the muſic of the woodland choir,
And lead thy lovely ſiſterhood along
In flowery fantaſtic chace. Bear each,
Lightly depending from her careleſs arm,
The mingled baſket of ten thouſand hues,
Bloſſoms of ev'ry odour, and with hand
Profuſely bounteous ſtrew them in the vale,
Or crown the mountain with their fragrant wreath.
Come not, as once I met thee, wrapt in clouds

Down-ſtooping awful, and with no vain threat
Charged, when thy furious ſulphur-breathing ſteeds,
By lightning laſh'd, gallop'd with thund'ring hooſs
The hollow amphitheatre of heaven,
Till æther roared above, and earth beneath
Quaked at the hurry of thy ſultry wheels.
Yet come not ſhowerleſs, but let thy brief
And tranſitory cloud oft intercept
The glowing day-beam, and with ſilken ſound
Diſpenſe its gentle fertilizing dews
Upon the thankful champain. Thus refreſh'd,
Earth ſhall the bridal ſuit of youth put on,
And hill and valley, in the various hues
Of mingled verdure dreſs'd, ſeem to the ſight
A lovely paradiſe, where all is freſh,

All fair and flouriſhing, and nothing ſear.

How elegant yon furze-hill clothed in gold!

Though diſtant, the ſoft undulating breeze

That ſweeps its flow'rs and after laves the cheek,

Bears to the noſtril of its faint perfume

Sufficient to ſubdue and drowſe the ſenſe

Nor make it wiſh for more. Behold at hand

Preſage delightful of the beauteous year;

The bud, no longer cautious, from the bough

Drops its ſmall winter tunic, and beſtrews

With flaky ſhow'r the gravelled path beneath.

Now ſends the garden all its glories forth,

With many a nodding pyramid of flowers,

Or pale or purple-hued, her varniſh'd leaf

The lilac decks. Laburnum at her ſide

Weeps gold, ſweet mourner! From behind uprears,
And toſſes high in air her frothy globes,
Her unſubſtantial roſes, light as foam
Of new milk bubbling in the cow-herd's pail,
The beauteous guelder ſhrub. Along the wall
Diſplays the fruit-tree its ſuperbeſt bloom.
The glorious ſhew fond appetite ſurveys,
And dreams of ſpecial apricots unborn,
Of the fine-flavour'd nect'rine, juicy gage,
Cherry delicious, plumb with purple coat,
Sweet pear and mellow apple, luſcious fig,
And the well-reliſh'd orb of autumn peach
Which almoſt melts or e'er it reach the lip.

Where'er the cherry ſpreads its flowery tufts,
Tis *pleaſure* to ſurvey the ſnowy pomp,

And pauſe in contemplation of the hum
Of mingled bees induſtrious, that invade
And rifle in ſucceſſion ev'ry flower;
Some large, and gifted with the voice profound
Of mellow baſs, ſome with the loftier pipe
Of tenor ſoft, of ſmall ſoprano ſome,
That fancy oft may deem ſhe hears diſtinct
The ſweet coincidence of fellow tones
Producing harmony's full chord divine.
Where the meek ſycomore, of nothing vain,
Covers with foliage its depending flowers,
The ſame harmonious murmur ſhall be heard;
Which feeds delay and gratifies repoſe
Beneath his ſinging bough, from earlieſt morn
To ſultry noon, from noon to lateſt eve.

What wonder that the hind his evening tube
Of ſweet Virginian fragrance at his door
Delights to kindle, if thy drowſy branch
His bench o'erſhadow? Luxury it is
Here to be ſtationary, or where'er
Around the honied foliage of the lime
The bee by day and chafer hums at eve,
Roaring profound and buzzing as it 'lights
To ſup upon the dewy fragrant leaf.

O lovely ſeaſon! when on ev'ry bough
The recent equipage of beauty glows
Divine, and even in the buſh appears
The manifeſted God. How ſweet to ſenſe,
How delicate the breeze that lades its wings
With odours from the hawthorn! To the ſpot

Where dwells the ſweet allurer, decking late
Her crowded foliage with abundant flow'rs,
Turns the fond eye to gaze, and, ſmit with love,
Marks here the ſwelling bough's expanded bloom,
And there a hoſt of beauties yet unborn,
Globules unnumbered the prolific branch
Beſetting thick around, ere long to unfold
Their milky petals to th' enamoured bee.
Hard by, another peerleſs beauty blooms.
Behold the bluſhing crab, and view elate
Her ſanguine bloſſoms intermingled well
With crimſon buds unblown, and her red arm,
To the leſs rubicund eſpalier's branch
Or maiden orchard's bough of ſnow, prefer.
Such is the rural apple; emblem fair

Of nature's ſweet uneducated maid,

Whoſe glowing cheek, by city air unbleached,

The bloom of health and lovelineſs retains.

No lily fairer in attire, no roſe

More delicately bluſhing, lo! ſhe comes,

From the religious altar juſt diſmiſſed

With finger conſcious of the ring it wears,

A bride conſorted. Native modeſty

Down-weighs her drooping eye-lid to the ground,

And rich confuſion glows upon her cheek.

The village ſpinſters ſhower on her head

And ſtrew before her the full lap of flowers,

Not without caution culled, leſt aught unfair,

Offenſive aught, or aught of jealous hue,

Or unprolific, ill expreſs the hope

Of joy and peace and fertile days to come.

Say now, which moſt excells, the ſanguine flower

Of the wild apple that adorns its bough,

Or glowing roſe of her diſordered cheek?

And ſay, on which would thy tranſported heart

Beſtow in preference the ſmile or kiſs?

Now ev'ry feather'd tenant of the grove

Labours his ſweeteſt ſong, ſtudious to cheer

His buſy mate, a penſive architect

That builds the woven wonder of the neſt,

Laps in a gentle cradle lined with down

Her future brood, or vigilant expects

Day after day the prægnant egg to live,

And ſupplicate proviſion, not in vain.

Such care maternal needs the ſweet relief

Of laboured ſong, and ſometimes, parent Sir,
The free aſſiſtance of a ſilent beak.
Enamoured ſongſters, *grateful* is the taſk,
While you from ev'ry brake the riſing orb
With ſweet hoſanna welcome, to admire
And mark the ſeveral energies, that fill
Your morning anthem of ſpontaneous praiſe.
The ſparrow couple with induſtrious bill
The ſcattered ſtraw collect, contriving ſnug
Under the cottage eave or low-roofed barn
Their genial couch. More than mere chirpers now,
They watch the floating feather as it flies,
Eye-ſerve the gooſe for his ſuperfluous down,
Or dreſſing fowl, or ſelf-adorning drake,
And bear triumphant the looſe ſpoil away.

Nor theſe alone are buſy. Feathery pairs,
Innumerable as the kindling bud,
Of wedded cares partake, and build the neſt,
And hopes divide, with conſtancy that ſhames
Man's brittle contract and infirm regard.
Lo! to the ſteeple with alternate wing
Bears expeditious his long twig the daw,
Nor ſeldom ſtruggles with his awkward freight
And drops it, ſtartled by the hooting boy
That ſhouts beneath. The ſolitary dove,
Which loves the ſtill dilapidated tower
Of deſert caſtle, or the time-cleft arch
Of ancient chantry, whoſe unſhelter'd ſhafts
Ivy in pity clothes, and verdant moſs
Crowns in reſpect his weather-beaten head,

With frequent wing alighting in the field
Bears the looſe ſtubble thence, and builds on high
Her bed unſeen, beyond the pilferer's reach.
His airy nurs'ry in the neighb'ring elm
Conſtructs the ſocial rook, and makes the grove
That girds the crumbling edifice around,
And ev'ry angle of its ruined pile,
With the baſs note of his harſh love reſound.
Tell me, philoſopher, in what ſage ſchool
Of perfect wiſdom were the feathery folk
Taught to diverſify and labour each
The ſeveral neſt of his peculiar race?
Where learned the ſloven ſparrow, little wiſe
Or little ſtudious to excel, his art
Inferior, the maternal cell to thatch.

Whence drew the marten his ſuperior ſkill
To knead and temper, maſon-like, the ſlime
Of ſtreet or ſtagnant pool, and build aloft
Beneath the cornice brink or ſhady porch
His ſnug depending couch, on nothing hung,
Founded in air, and finiſh'd with a neat
Convenient aperture, from whence he bolts
Sudden, and whither briſk returns, with mouth
Filled for his hiant offspring? Whence received
The daw his leſſon, or the rook, the one
Within the lonely unfrequented tower
Weaving his baſket of unnumber'd twigs,
The other on the topmoſt elm ſublime
His wicker cradle fixing, to be rocked
By the rude nurſe adverſity's ſtrong gale?

Whence knew the ſprightly golden-pinion'd finch,
Of ruddy countenance, and iv'ry beak,
And coat of ſleekeſt umber, his fond art
To line with locks and pave with neateſt love
The verdant neſt of interwoven moſs,
Faſt to the bluſhing apple's forked branch
Amid the bloſſoms of the codlin tied?
Thou prying ſchool-boy, ſpare the neat deſign,
And think of HIM whoſe all-protecting hand
Secretes the neſtling with innumerous leaves,
And with abundant foliage makes obſcure
And to the ſight impervious, branches erſt
Eaſily pierced, or by the ſolar ray,
Or beam of human eye, or arrowy gale,
Dark and impenetrable now to all.

Think of HIS mercy that protects the neſt;
And, kind to all, with more eſpecial love
The linnet ſpare and finch of crimſon face,
That twitter each the none-offending ſong
Of quiet prettineſs, and pluck the down
Of the prolific thiſtle for their bread.
Not to deſtroy be earneſt, but to ſave.
Gentle thy heart, till it obſerve ill-pleaſed
Yon feathery ſpoils of the ſweet ſongſter ſlain,
And in the warm and ſunny nook devoured
By the ſwift falcon. Let thy curſe reprove
The tyrant ſoaring in the clouds above
(An emblem apt of thy ſeverer ſelf)
With gyrous ſcrutiny the furze-clad hill
Cloſely ſurveying as he winds along,

Or in mid æther hovering, till his eye
Some faſcinated warbler fix below,
And he to ſeize him from his airy watch
Drop ſudden, and not always drop in vain.

What time the ſun has from the weſt withdrawn
The various hues that graced his cloudy fall—
When the recumbent ruminating fold
Greets with peculiar odour the fond ſenſe
Of the lone wand'rer— when the recent leaf
Of clover 'gins to ſleep, and, white with dew,
Cloſes its tender triple-finger'd palm
Till morning dawn afreſh— when the moon wears
Nor hood nor veil, nor looks with cold regard
Through the fine lawn of intervening cloud,
But lifts a fair round viſage o'er the vale,

And ſmiles affection which no bard can paint
No painter with poetic pencil ſing—
When the dark cloud that couches in the weſt
Seems to imbibe the laſt pale beam of eve,
Abſorbing in its dun and gloomy folds
The feeble reſidue of dying day—
Is it not *pleaſure*, with unbended mind
To muſe within or meditate abroad,
While either hand in the warm boſom ſleeps,
And either foot falls feebly on the floor,
Or ſhaven ſward, or ſtone that paves the path
Of village footway winding to the church?
Twere *paſſing pleaſure*, if to man alone
That hour were grateful: but with like deſire
The duſky holiday of thick'ning night

Enjoys the chuckling partridge, the ſtill mouſe,
The rabbit foraging, the feeding hare,
The nightingale that warbles from the thorn,
And twilight-loving ſolitary owl
That ſkims the meadow, hovers, drops, her prey
Seizes, and ſcreeching to her tower returns.
Her woolly little ones there hiſs on high,
And there who will may ſeek them, but who dares
Muſt 'bide the keen magnanimous rebuff
Of irritated love, and quick deſcend,
By the maternal talon not in vain
Inſulted, baffled, ſcared, and put to flight.
Tis *pleaſant* in this peaceful ſerious hour
To tread the ſilent ſward that wraps the dead,
Once our companions in the cheerful walks

Of acceptable life, the ſame ere long
In the dark chambers of profound repoſe.
All have their kindred here, and I have mine,
Yes, my ſweet Iſabel, and I have mine,
To die— what is it but to ſleep and ſleep,
Nor feel the wearineſs of dark delay
Through the long night of time, and nothing know
Of intervening centuries elapſed,
When thy ſweet morn, Eternity, begins?
Or elſe— what is it but a welcome change
From worſe to better, from a world of pain
To one where fleſh at leaſt can nothing feel,
And pain and pleaſure have no equal ſway?
What is it but to meet ten thouſand friends
Whoſe earthly race was finiſh'd ere our own,

And be well welcome, where the timorous foot
Fear'd to intrude, and whence no foot returns?
To me what were it but the happier lot
To find my long-loſt Iſabel, and ſhed
(If tears of joy are ſhed where tears of grief
Fall never, and immortal angels weep
At bliſs exceſſive) joy's profuſeſt ſhower:
To tell her what was felt, and what was ſung,
When cruel death unſparing from my ſight
Pluck'd her away, and wafted her pure ſpirit
Whither no ſoul could tell?— But huſh! my heart,
Leſt ſorrow burſt her cicatrice anew,
And *painful* thought, which ſaddens my ſlow ſtep,
Diſperſe the *pleaſures* of this tranquil hour.

Place of my birth, how many are the ſounds
Which, peaceful as thou art, thy vernal morn,
Ere yet I riſe, improve! Loud lows the calf,
Loud bleats the lamb, and the reſponſive cock
His kind attentions with tranſition quick
Duly performs— his open-throated ſquall
That bids his wives and little-ones beware,
Oft as the falcon or the dove appears—
His chuckle of affection to his dames—
The ſhuffle of his wing, on this ſide now,
Now exerciſed on that, with low-bowed head,
And eye attentive to the fair he courts—
His croak of ſage compoſure— his briſk call
That ſummons to the huſwife's ſcattered grain—
His ſympathizing clamour o'er the neſt—

His loud *what what* of wonder— and his ſhrill
Far-ſounding challenge to his diſtant peer.
His feather'd concubine, meantime, aloud
Prates as ſhe paſſes, or with ſilly pride
Cackles incontinent of new-laid eggs.
The ſea-mew cries aloft with mingled tone;
And, plauſible and ſilver-tongued, below
The drake his chattering ſeraglio leads
At the near pool to bathe. Anon is heard
The turkey gabbling at the whiſtler boy
With hollow throat profound, as 'mid his dames
He ſtruts with ſwelling plumes, erected fan,
Low-curtſied wing, and countenance inflamed.
The croaking raven his profounder note,
Seated aloft upon the bending elm,

Harſhly pronounces, or his ſable mate
Hails as ſhe ſoars on high with tenor ſoft,
Expreſſing well eſteem and manly love.
How *pleaſant* is it, as the break of day
Dawns, and the mountains lift their glowing heads
Into the golden ſun-beam, to be rouſed
By the faint tinkling of the farmer's team,
His bells of ev'ry tone, a mingled peal
Remote and indiſtinct! Swelled by approach
They jingle loud, and louder as they paſs,
Then ſoftly ſing again, and die away.
The voluntary toils of morning paſt,
How *pleaſant* to allow the ſtudious mind
Convenient pauſe, and ev'ry thought diſmiſſed,
To ramble heedleſs o'er the bleating down,

'Mid thouſand thouſand children of the flock
Yet from the dam unweaned, and flowery tufts
Ten thouſand thouſand of rich furze, erewhile
By the faſt fleecy nibbler neatly trimmed,
And decorated now in robe ſuperb,
Wrapping its branches in a blaze of gold
As if the Deity himſelf were there.
Be this my Horeb, often as mine eye,
Fatigued with poring o'er the page divine,
Thirſts for the ſweet amuſements of the hill;
Thirſts to ſurvey the clear unbillowy deep
Which lifts the diſtant veſſel into heaven,
And the green vale, that, various in its hues,
E'en to the pebbly verge of the blue flood
Its cattle-ſprent encloſures neatly ſpreads.

How *delicate* to baſk upon the brink
Of yon high cliff, which overlooks the broad
And boundleſs ocean, at what time becalmed
The war-ſhip near at hand with flaccid ſail
Upon the poliſhed boſom of the flood
Lies motionleſs! How *pleaſant*, while the ſun
Upon the foſter'd ſhoulder tepid plays,
Inducing laſſitude and faint repoſe,
To plant the teleſcope, and view diſtinct,
Submitted to the clear and curious eye,
The thunder-laden monſter! Paſſing thence,
How *ſweet* to cull from the meridian bank,
Which underlies the wood-inveſted hill,
The recent, vigorous, protected flower
Of cowſlip, harebell, violet, or roſe

Of prime peculiar, and with full-filled hand
To ſteal upon the nightingale unſeen,
Where'er ſhe ſings, inviſible as wont,
And marvel at the wonder-working God,
Who in the compaſs of her ſlender breaſt
Such ſweet exuberance of muſic lodged;
Such melody of loveliest plaintive power
Whatever mood ſhe chooſe, whether to weep
In feeble tone acute, or trill profound
Song ſelf-conſoling, or jug ſweet content,
Or by ten thouſand varied notes expreſs
Liquid complacency and melting love!
No longer now ſtand dozing in the cloſe,
Or ruminate recumbent, the ſad herd,
But ſcattered wide upon the paſtured hill,

Meadow, and marſh, people the rural ſcene,
And add new beauty whereſoe'er they graze.
Among them ſkips and races the wild calf,
And colt ingenuous, daring gentle touch,
And nothing conſcious of his future toils.
No grazer he, nor uſeful ſervant yet,
To help the team along, or bear his lord,
But time finds much to play, to friſk, to bound,
And gallop o'er the field, or idly baſk
Stretch'd at his eaſe in the meridian beam.

How *pleaſant* now upon the village ſtile
To reſt well-wearied, while the jovial boy,
From ſchool diſmiſſed, upon the ſunny green
Pitches his wicket, a ſtone-ſteadied hat,
And bowls exulting! Of encumbrance ſtript,

He for his maiden viſage nothing fears,

But to the ſcorching day-beam, unconcerned,

His cheek and boſom bares, nor aught regards

The freckled aſpect or the ſun-burnt ſkin.

Piece of the nether millſtone is his heart

Who marks ill-pleaſed the frolic of the child,

Or views the rural feſtival unmoved.

Me it *delights* to overhear the dance

Upon the winnowed floor of the void grange,

To pauſe at hand, and liſten to the ſound

Of the briſk viol challenging the foot

And of the foot reſpondent, and to ſee

The village maid and village hind alert

Pacing the giddy labyrinth of joy,

Each in the trim of holiday attired.

Nor pleaſes not, upon the ſocial green,
The game laborious of the manly ball
Aimed at the wicket, and its taper ſhanks
Leveling certain, but for hindrance quick
And reſolute repulſe of the ſtrong blow,
That ſends it thunder-ſtruck aloft in air
Or o'er the plain rebounding. Thou haſt charms,
Rural feſtivity, not ſoon ſurpaſſed,
Compare thee, as we may, with ſport polite,
The neat amuſement faſhion qualifies
Till nice refinement ſits without diſdain
Spectatreſs of the ſcene. Never more keen
Their livelieſt extacy, than when, for health
To George reſtored, illumination's lamp
Was freely kindled, and the rural throng

From ev'ry door convened, along the ſtreet
Mingled in loyalty's triumphant maze.
Then pipe and viol felt alone fatigue,
While, nothing wearied, they with foot alert
The blazing window's artificial day
Down danced, the fretted cupola of heaven
Their ſpacious ball-room, their aſſembler God.
Tis *ſport itſelf* to ſee the cheerful lamb
Skip in the field, and lead the wanton race
In the ſoft ſunſhine of departing day.
Tis *pleaſure* to ſurvey the couching flock,
When ev'ry mother ruminates apart,
Recumbent in the duſk, and ev'ry ſon,
Sportful no longer and his bleating huſhed,
Reclines expectant of the dewy night

Faſt by his chewing dam. And *pleaſure* tis
To ſee the gracious moon prevail aloft,
While the nocturnal curlew greets the ear
With ſweet contented pipe, foreboding calm.
What *tranſport* is it, when awaking day
Its roſy eyelid lifts, to hear the ſound
Of mower whetting his neglected ſcythe,
To hear his wide and double-handed ſweep
Shear the reluctant herbage from the field,
Diſpoſing well in ſwath ſucceeding ſwath
The fragrant burden, which his dewy blade
Severs with eaſe and repetition keen
From the luxuriant mead! How neat appears,
Shorn of its beard promiſs, the tender ſward!
How ſweet the bean-field now, in bloſſoms clothed,

With, here and there, a well-ſupported ſtem
Of pea that overtops the ſcene, and waves
The healthy banner of its crimſon flower
High in the liberal air; with royal eaſe,
And condeſcenſion graceful, to the gale
Still bowing. The ſpent orchard's bough its bloom
Retains no longer. Raviſhed by the breeze,
Its drifted petal mounts and floats on high,
Or on the muſing poet ſoftly ſheds
The grateful ſhow'r of ſpring's peculiar ſnow;
As, thoughtful, he ſurveys and ſtrives to paint
Earth green beneath, and æther blue above,
And the progreſſive cloud that creeps between,
Trailing its fleece, to niveous fairneſs bleached,
'Croſs the cerulean temple, the clear dome

Of heaven ſublime; where ſits enthroned on high
The worſhipped Godhead, while all nations meet
And thinly people the vaſt aiſle below.

How ſweet the *pleaſure* when the muffled orb
Unſeen has journeyed all the livelong day,
And only here and there by chance diſplayed
A ſloping ſidelong beam, to ſee it ſink
Into a clear horizon— to obſerve
The cloud-ſkirt far inflamed, till its bright diſc,
At length apparent, ſwells into a drop
Of pureſt bullion, cooling ere it falls!
Lo! now, a globe complete, the crimſon ball,
Shorn of its luſtre, of the ſhadowy earth
Takes its laſt farewel. The marſh-loving gnat
Swarms in its mellow mitigated ray

Along the ſtagnant dyke, or bank of Ouſe
Slow moving ſeaward, or more ſpeedy brook,
Or dances o'er the maid who ſinging fills
Her brimmer pail from the cud-chewing cow,
Or o'er the muſing loiterer aloft
Hums inſignificant. Now with ſlow ſtep
Long let me ramble in the fragrant ſhade
Of the dark winding lane, whoſe powdered thorn
On either hand the hollow ſhadowed way
Borders impenetrable, ſave where gate,
Rude ſtile, or ill-healed gap, a tranſient glimpſe
Yield of ſweet landſcape, village church and farm,
Or cottage ſnug beneath o'erhanging elms,
Or diſtant hill, or wood, or watery vale.
Or by the wood-ſide patient let me ſtand

While the mild orb of tranquil eve departs,
What time the moon, aſcending as he ſinks,
With aſpect ſwoln and ſickly ſcarce appears
In the dun-belted eaſt, to hear the ſong
Of ſylvan choiriſters, hoſanna ſweet
Sweet hallelujah to the King of kings
With free voice chanting. Above all delights
The wood-lark ecchoing, the nightingale
Gracing with plaintive pauſe her various ſtrain,
The wild dove cooing diapaſon ſoft,
Language of love with elegance expreſſed,
And ouzle fluting with melodious pipe.
Deem not they praiſe the Deity amiſs.
Pleaſed he their evening ſacrifice accepts,
Thankſgiving pure, nor ſcorns it that it flows

From hearts which know him not. Lo! as they ſing,
With grace and beauty kindles the pale cheek
Of his wan miniſter the orb of night;
The ſmile of pleaſure glows upon her brow,
She thanks them. Down the village path, releaſed
And pleaſed, I ſaunter homeward, and the hind
From diſtant toil returning paſs revered;
Or croſs the freſh green field to ſee the herd
Or weary team, diſmiſſed, with eager mouths
Crop the young herbage; or attend the ſound
Of village children playful, and the tone
Of pipe or viol, clumſily produced
By the rude finger of the ſelf-taught clown.
To morrow, with the bee of humble fame,
I riſe to ſing and trace the field anew.

He, ever buſy, ſtill from flow'r to flow'r,
Stooping their limber ſtems, the live-long day
Travels with audible melodious hum.
Though in ten thouſand cells of varied ſhape
Her precious balm ingenious nature hides,
He knows them all, and readily unlocks
The labiate bloſſom's cloſe elaſtic lip,
To ſteal the dear ambroſia from within.
But why, ſweet traveller, whoſe eager lip
Delights to viſit the bloom-ſprinkled branch,
And leave a kiſs upon its ev'ry flower,
Why ſcorns it to ſalute the beauteous roſe
And greets his ſweet bud never? Partial bird,
Has May alone thy love? and ſpreads in vain
June the ſweet treaſures of her flowery lap?

Why elſe untouched upon its thorny ſtem
Hangs the pale roſe unfolding and the red?
Theſe I contemn not, every bud that blows
Viſiting daily with a bee's deſire,
And ſerenading with impartial praiſe.
Muſical wanderer, where'er thou ſtray'ſt,
How well does thy free toil reſemble mine!
From flow'r to flow'r with unabated thirſt
So roam I ſedulous, hum as I paſs,
And bear mellifluous treaſure to my cell,
Song dropping honey, verſe diſtilling balm.
Now ſtill night ſilences both thee and me;
And *pleaſed* that I have ſung, place of my birth,
Thy *pleaſures* multifarious, paſs the ſun

Through what fair ſign it will, I drop the wing,

Hie to my grounded neſt, and ſing no more.

FINIS.

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